V. LETTER TO MOTHER MACRINE (OR MAKRENA)

In a letter to Father Thévaux and the community of King George Sound, Australia, in 1847, Father Libermann wrote:

I have to tell you about another grace which Mary obtained for our Congregation and especially for the benefit of Father Blanpin. This good confrere had completely lost the use of his voice and had been compelled to return to Europe. At the beginning of October he had the good fortune to meet two missionary Bishops, Most Rev. Pompalier and Bishop Luquet. They pitied his sad condition and advised him to visit and ask the prayers of a saintly Basilian religious named Mother Makrena.

Mother Makrena had been abbess of a Basilian convent at Minsk in Poland. By order of the Russian Emperor, she had been kept in prison for seven years because of her fidelity to the Catholic Faith. The scars with which her body is covered bear witness to the tortures she underwent. There were about thirty religious with her. Almost all died as a result of their tortures and the others remained lame, blind, etc., for life. Only three survived by a miracle. Mother Makrena suffered more than all the others. She managed to escape by jumping from a high wall when her guardians were in a drunken stupor. She journeyed on foot in the middle of winter through the great forests of Poland and eventually reached Rome. She has been living in a convent of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart.

Mother Makrena told Father Blanpin to kneel before a picture of the Most Holy Virgin which had been blessed by Pope Pius IX just a few days before. She told him to say prayers for ten days. On the tenth day there was no sign of improvement and Father went back to Mother Makrena and told her so. She scolded him for his lack of faith, made him kneel before the same picture and told him to pronounce the Holy Names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph with all his might. He made an effort and pronounced them with a voice that was a little loud but extremely weak. She then rose and told him that he would
be cured and ordered him to repeat the Holy Names every hour of the day. His voice became a little stronger.

He went once more to see Mother Makrena at four o'clock and found her kneeling before the picture of the Blessed Virgin in a sort of ecstasy. Moved by respect and religious fervor, Father Blanpin knelt beside her. After a few moments and in the presence of several people she ordered him to kneel on her prie-dieu and told him to pronounce the holy Name of Jesus. Our confrere was completely cured.

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La Neuville, January 3, 1847 Vol. 9, p. 11

Dear Reverend Mother:

You have been most kind to take such an interest in my dear confrere, Father Blanpin, and divine Goodness has deigned to grant him a wonderful favor as a result of your prayers. Hence it is my duty to write and express to you our heartfelt gratitude, first to Jesus Christ our good Lord and the Most Holy Virgin our well-beloved Mother, and then to you who are so devoted to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and whom God has so inspired with full confidence in His divine Mercy and with such admirable charity towards our poor confrere. Through your trust and charity the blessing of God has come upon him and he has been given back the power of speech which, henceforth, will belong to Jesus Christ and will be used solely for His glory and that of Mary His Holy Mother.

The favor of the marvellous cure granted to Father Blanpin has profoundly touched my heart. But the thing that gives me even greater joy and which I esteem even more highly than the physical cure, is the interior grace which must have
accompanying it and the fervor which will, no doubt, result from the knowledge of your faith and charity which on the occasion of his cure was revealed to Father Blanpin by Divine Providence.

I hope, dear reverend Mother, that those graces will bear fruits of salvation and blessing, and that your words so full of piety and love of God, will strengthen him more and more and increase and perfect the virtues which God's goodness had already implanted in his soul, a soul that, before that time, was merely longing to belong to Him entirely. Those words will encourage him in the resolution to sacrifice himself completely to God's glory and the salvation of souls.

So, once more, accept my sincere thanks for all your kindness towards our dear confere and your continual interest in him. It is not possible for us to repay you for the blessing you have got for us and for this Father. All I can do is to pray and make others pray for your unhappy country, Poland. We have been praying for a long time and with great fervor for this beloved and so deeply afflicted part of God's Church. We will continue to unite our prayers to yours. We hope that God will have compassion on His poor children, and mercifully aid them in their intense sufferings and save them from the great danger of being lost.

May we ask you, dear Reverend Mother, to take an interest in the souls which divine mercy has entrusted to our care? I am sure that Father Blanpin spoke to you on behalf of these poor peoples (the Negroes). I take the liberty of repeating his request that you join your prayers and labors to ours and thus draw down God's blessings on us.

Pray that we may remain faithful to all the graces God gives us, and that we may work fervently and fruitfully in that part of the vineyard in which the Father of the Christian Family employs us.
LETTER TO MOTHER MACRINE

Accept this expression of gratitude for the great charity with which God has filled your heart in our behalf, and believe that I am,

Your most humble and devoted servant in Jesus Christ,

FATHER FRANCIS LIBERMANN,
Superior of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary