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03. Trusting acceptance of sickness

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Trusting acceptance of sickness

To Samson Libermann¹

On 24th December, 1926, Jacob became Francis Mary-Paul Libermann. His faith was now Trinitarian as he believed in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The thought of becoming a priest grew naturally in his mind. Francis spent four years as a theology student at Saint-Sulpice for the Diocese of Paris. He had his first epileptic fit on the 13th March, 1929, the day before he was due to receive the sub-diaconate. He was in the room of the Director, M. Carbon² and this attack was followed by many more. His progress towards the priesthood was stopped but he stayed at the seminary, living on his scholarship. He realised that the Sulpicians could not keep him indefinitely and so, full of confidence, he put himself entirely into God's hands.

This letter to his brother Samson is dated 7 November, 1831. Here we just have the final section which concerns his spiritual outlook. The rest of the letter is about family business and is of no great interest here. At the end of 1831, the Sulpicians, sympathetic towards his health problem and his positive spiritual attitude, welcomed him into "La Solitude", their noviciate and house of philosophy at Issy. All in all, he would spend six years there doing various jobs and gaining appreciation for his work as a spiritual director and counsellor.

Paris, 7 November 1831

..... As for me, nothing has changed; I'm still at the seminary and will stay here until the Superiors decide to send me away, since they cannot keep me here as I am incapable of

¹ N.D. I, pp. 153-155

² See Index

becoming a priest. But I beg you, once again, not to worry about me. Our Father in heaven will know what to do with me as I belong wholly to him, body and soul. That's all I have to say on this matter. I think I reminded you recently how Jesus tells us that as God takes care of the birds of the air, all the more will he look after his servants, who are worth a lot more than any birds. I know that you are good Christians and so you understand this perfectly.

So, goodbye for now, dear brother and sister, I entrust you wholly into the hands of our Father.

Your brother,

F. Libermann, acolyte