
Documents 1667H

Fr. Sanvitores sends a Memorial to the Queen

Source: AGI Fil. 82-2-29 and others.

Note: The original papers in the archives are in poor condition. The edges of the covering letter are missing.

H1. Covering letter to the Queen, dated Manila [July] 1667

Original text in Spanish.

Señora

*Ya por la bondad de el Señor podemos dar a V. Magd. los pas--- de el buen logro de su catholico y real zelo en la converssion, que proximamente de la gran multitud de almas de pobres Gentiles, que havitan la estendida cordillera de Islas, que corren de Norte a Sur desde el Xapon hasta la tierra Austrial incognita quales quadrava hasta aora bien el nombre vulgar de Islas **de los Ladrones**, por [la] priçion en que las tenian los tyrranos Prinçipes de las tinieblas con propissimo vo[lundad de] N. Señor Jesuchristo, y al Rey N. Señor, despues de haverse tomado la [posesion] de ellas por la Santa Fee, y Magd. chatolica [sic] mas ha de çien años ha.*

*Mas ya se deberan restituir al dichosso nombre de Islas de M[aria ...] en el nombre habreviado llamarse **Islas Marianas**, pues por medio de la p[rovidencia de] V. Magd. se restituieron, o restituiran a la antigua y legitima posesion de la divina, y humana, en que entraron que los auspiçios, y espeçial amparo de la SS... Reina Madre de el Rey de el çielo, que fue la primera Apostolica ... Pobres, con cuiã apparçiion se convirtio y murio reçiien baptiçado el primer ... que sabemos de dichas Islas, como mas por extenso se refirio ya en el informe, que [a V. Ma-]gestad remiti por medio de el Padre Confessor junto con las otras; que en dias señal... la SSma Virgen en las Naos de su invocaçion, y en otras muestras de su es[peçial pa-]troçinio ha dispuesto el Señor en orden a la conversion de estos Pobres.*

Effecto mui espeçial ha sido de la divina providenzia presente, el haver [prepa]-rado el Señor tal attividad, prudenzia y çelo de el serviçio de ambas Magestades en e[se] Capitan General, Presidente, y Governador actual de estas Islas D. Diego de Salzedo, que no contento con la universal paz de estas Islas, que ha conseguido en su Gobierno la mayor que se ha goçado en ellas hasta aora, pues no solo estan enfrenados, y quietos [los] enemigos forasteros, Chino, Tartaro, Japon, Jolo, Borney, y Mindanao con quien ultimamente se ajustaron las paçes, y esto sin mas ruido, y gasto de --- y gasto de real haver, que el ruido, que ha hecho la fama de el v[-]aloroso nom-]bre de D. Diego Salcedo; como tambien los Naturales y atributantes --est---- las tantas veçes en otros tiempos inquietos, y sublevados, y estan sin la menor inqu[-ietud] no contento pues con esto el Governador solìcita con tantas veras el añadir, y paçificar [de] nuebo tantas otras naçiones, ya por tierra en lo que llaman Igolotes, que dentro de[sta] Isla de Manila tenian lo mexor de ella, reveldes aun al suave iugo de Xto, e imp[erio] de el Rey N. Señor a quien y se ban sujetado en grande numero, y --- [one line missing] --- Apostolica de la sagrada --- de estas Islas, y tierras; yra tambien por mar emprendiendo esta facçion --- Islas Marianas, pro medio de la qual se puede esperar tendra mui presto [puestos?] a los pies de N. Sr. Jesuchristo, y de el Rey N. Sr. tantas tierras [y] gentes, que segun las relaciones de los descubridores, de que ba copia en el informe, [e in-]formes, haçen otra quarta parte del Mundo todo, que esta aun en las sombras de la muerte, y summa ignorenzia de el que los crio, y redimio.

*Y socorros, Señora, no seran bien empleados en la prosecucion de tales empressas, --- que demostraçiones del agrado de V. Mgd. en obras tan dignas de su piedad, y g[ran]deça, para que reconozcan los demas Governadores, Virreyes, y Capitanes Generales del Rey N. Sr. quan de veras estima y premia los serviçios, que çeden en tan[to] ajuumento de Nuestra Santa Fee, y converssion de las almas, que Dios, y el Summo [Pon-]tifiçe han puesto debaxo del Real amparo, y protecçion suia, y dominio, y mas q[ue] se proçede con la attividad, y puntualidad que ha tenido el Governador y Capitan General D. Diego Salcedo en dar cumplimiento a la Real Zedula de esta Mission que a los dos años, que se despacho en Madrid, se vee ya en su entero cumplimiento en Manila, --- aun en materias mui corrientes es cossa rarissima quanto mas en esta tan ardua, --- espiritual, que neçessita de tantos medios temporales, que a no ser tan singular el animo y zelo, que ha dado el Sr. al Governador presente, y su attividad, y puntual[idad] tan grande para executar las ordenes de su Magd, pudiera haver tenido mas mo[ti]vos, que han tenido otros, para eludir, o retardar las reales zedulas, que açerca de es[ta] Mission ha despachado su Magd tan repetidamente, sin haverles dado cumplimiento[to] en estos çien años, y se le da aora quando se halla tan falto el Governador de socorros, y me[dios] y ha sido menester poner la maior parte de su sueldo para suplir la falta de la caxa real en esta y otras empressas del divino y real serviçio de estas Islas; y hallandosse sin navio apossito para este viage se empeño en haçer de nuebo el Galeon **S. Diego**, que a fuerça de su actividad, en tan breve tiempo ha salido extremadamente bueno para este y otros viages del serviçio de su Magd., sin cessar por esso*

la fabrica de la nao N. S^a del Buen Socorro, que ba por el de estas Islas este año a la Nueva España.

La divina Magd. augmente al Rei N. Señor muchos ministros de semejante zelo; que con sus Reynos augmenten el de N. Señor JesuXto, y a V. Magestad y a toda su real cassa de la felicidad, y larga vida de que neçessitan tantas almas, con muchos mereçimientos de la eterna, como instantemente supplicamos sus obligadissimos Capellanes, de este Collegio de la Compañia de JHS de Manila çerca ya de embarcarme en el Galeon S. Diego para las Islas Marianas, llamadas hasta aora bulgarmente de los Ladrones.

Manila y [blank] de 1667.

Ser[enissim]^a Señora.

B.I.m. de V.Magd.,

S. m. [v. su sie]rvo,

[Diego de San Vitores]

[Endorsement:] *Manila, sin fecha, 1667. V. 27 março 1669. Consexo. Sobre esto ay papeles antiguos y modernos en poder del Relator Valle: Pondera el grande fruto se a de dar a nuestro Señor con la reduçion de los Indios de las Islas de los Ladrones, (que ya se llaman Marianas) y la brevedad con que el Governador [Diego] de Salzedo, dió cumplimiento a la çedula, que sobre esto, se embio. Sin embargo del ---tos medios con que se han para cuyo efeto a suplido de su sueldo, la falta de la caxa Real, y a hecho hazer de nuevo el Galeon San Diego para el viaje y remite la memoria incluso en que da notizia de varias tierras y gentes que confinan estas Islas, y de algunos me[dios] para su conbersion abriendo se--- comercio de Filipinas con el Pe[ru].*

Translation.

My dear Lady:

Now through the kindness of the Lord we are able to give to Your Majesty the steps(?) to the good outcome of your Catholic and royal zeal in the conversion that will be made soon of the great multitude of souls of the poor heathens who inhabit the extended chain of Islands that run North to South from Japan as far as the unknown Austral Land, for which the common name of **Ladrones** was fitting very well up to now, on account of the imprisonment in which the tyrannical Princes of Darkness were keeping them, with the express permission of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the King our Lord, since possession was taken of them by the holy Faith, and his Catholic Majesty, over 100 years ago.

However, they will have to go back to the very lucky name of the Islands of Mary [Immaculate?], abbreviated to **Mariana Islands**, given that through the providence of your Majesty they have been restituted, or will be restituted, to the former and legitimate possession, divine and human, in which they were placed, under the auspices and special protection of the Blessed Queen Mother of the King of Heaven, who was the first Apostle of these poor people. Her apparition caused the first [native?] to be converted in the said Islands and he died recently baptized; more has been said about this

in the report that I have remitted to Y.M. through Father Confessor, along with the others.¹ In her day the Blessed Virgin showed, through the galleons bearing her name, and in other signs of her special patronage, that the Lord had arranged in order to achieve the conversion of these poor people.

A very special effect of divine providence at present has been for the Lord to have arranged for so much activity, prudence, and zeal in the service of both Majesties in the person of the present Captain General, President, and Governor of these Islands, Don Diego de Salcedo, who, not content with the global peace of these Islands which has been achieved during his government, the best that has been enjoyed in them until now, given that not only the foreign enemies are refrained and quiet, but also those in China, Tartary, Japan, Jolo, Borneo, and Mindanao with whom finally peace has been negotiated, and this without much fanfare, or waste of ... and cost to the Royal Treasury, other than the fame spread of the valorous name of Don Diego Salcedo. The natives and tributaries are also [quiet?]; so many times in the past they have been unruly, and revolted, and they are without the least disquiet. Not contented, then, with this, the Governor truly seeks to add, and pacify once more so many other nations, firstly on land, those they call Igorots who hold the best part of this Island of Manila, still rebellious against the sweet yoke of Christ, and the dominion of the King our Lord, to whom they are being subjected in great numbers, and ... [one line missing] ... Apostolic of the sacred ... of these Islands, and lands. There will also go by sea this conquest of the Mariana Islands, through which it is hoped will be obtained very quickly [by placing?] at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the King our Lord, so many lands and people, that, according to the accounts of the discoverers (a copy of whose report, or reports, enclosed) they constitute a quarter of the whole World, which is still in the shadows of death, and in complete ignorance of He who has created them, and redeemed them.

As far as succors are concerned, dear Lady, they would not be well employed in the prosecution of such enterprises, [otherwise] than as demonstrations of the pleasure of Y.M. in works so worthy of your piety, and greatness, in order for the other Governors, Viceroys, and Captain Generals of the King our Lord who so much esteems and rewards services that result in such an increase of our holy Faith and conversion of souls that God and the Holy Pontiff have placed under the Royal patronage, and his protection, and dominion, may proceed with the activity, and punctuality that Governor and Captain General Don Diego Salcedo has shown in complying with the Royal Decree about this Mission. Two years after it was despatched from Madrid, it has already been complied with in Manila. Even in the usual material things [speed?] is very rare indeed, the more so with this hard, spiritual [endeavor?], which needs so many material means

1 Ed. note: The Queen's confessor was Fr. John Everard Nidhard (or Nidardo, sometimes Nitardo, in Spanish). Born in the castle of Falkenstein, Austria, in 1607, he went to Spain with the Queen when she married Philip IV. After his death in 1665, a party at court, led by Don Juan de Austria, plotted against him and his power. Fr. Nidhard went to Rome, as a sort of Spanish ambassador, then became a Cardinal in 1672. He died in Rome in 1681. Among other things, he actively supported the concept of the Immaculate Conception.

that, if the attention and zeal that the present Governor had not be so singular, and his activity and punctuality so great to carry out the orders of your Majesty, he could have found many excuses, as many other have found, to elude, or delay, the royal decrees that your Majesty has despatched regarding this Mission so repeatedly, without having complied with them over these 100 years. The Governor gives these succors now that he finds himself so short of succors and means, and he has found it necessary to place the greater part of his salary to make up the deficiency of the royal funds, in this and other enterprises of divine and royal service in these Islands. Finding himself without a suitable ship for this voyage, he undertook to overhaul the galleon **San Diego**,¹ at the cost of much of his time, in such a short time that she has come out extremely good for this and other voyages in the service of Y.M., and this without affecting the construction of the galleon **Nuestra Señora del Buen Socorro** which is scheduled to go this year from these Islands to New Spain.

May his divine Majesty bless the King our Lord with many ministers with a similar zeal. May his Kingdoms increase along with the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. May He give happiness to your whole royal House, and the long life that so many souls need, with the gain of much merit for the eternal life, as we, your much obliged Chaplains, earnestly beg.

From this College of the Society of Jesus in Manila, now ready to embark aboard the galleon **San Diego** for the Mariana Islands, called until now with the common name of Ladrones.

Manila, [blank]² 1667.

Most Serene Lady.

Your servant who kisses your hands,
[Diego de San Vitores].

[Endorsement:] Manila, no date, 1667. Rec'd on 27 March 1669. **Council.** Regarding this, there are old and modern papers in the hands of the Reporter Valle: He ponders over the great fruit that our Lord expects from the reduction of the Indians of the Islands of the Ladrones (which are now called Marianas) and the little time it took Governor [Diego] de Salcedo to comply with the Decree that was sent about this. In spite of the shortage of means available(?) in the royal funds for this purpose, he has complemented them with his salary, and has had the galleon **San Diego** built for this voyage and he remits the enclosed memorial in which he gives notice of various lands and peoples in the vicinity of these Islands, and of some means for their conversion, by opening up trade between the Philippines and Peru.³

1 Ed. note: This galleon was built from scratch, although Fr. Sanvitores uses the expression "to make anew".

2 Ed. note: From Doc. 1668A, it is known that the San Diego left Cavite on 7 August 1667.

3 Ed. note: On 30 March 1669, the Council decided to have this letter, the attached memorial, and the papers in the hands of the Reporter, handed over to the Fiscal for an opinion.

H2. Other papers that are supposed to have been attached to the above letter were as follows:

- 1. Report about the Ladrone Islands**
- 2. Difficulty about taking along a garrison**
- 3. Difficulties that may arise against the proposed succor for the Ladrone through the ministers of the Society¹**

¹ Ed. note: This paper seems to have been a rehash of Doc. 1665C4/3.