
Document 1666A

Letter from Fr. Luis Medina to Fr. Cristóbal Pérez, dated Montilla 27 April 1666

Sources: (1) In Fr. Francisco García's Vida del Padre Luis de Medina (Madrid, 1673), pp. 139-142; (2) in Fr. Murillo Velarde's Historia (Manila, 1749), Lib. IV, cap. 6, n° 712; (3) in Fr. LeGobien's Histoire (Paris, 1700), pp. 129-132.

Note: Fr. Pérez was then Provincial of Andalusia.

Original text in Spanish

Pax Christi, &c.

Padre Provincial,

Yò me hallo con muchos escrùpulos; porque V.R. no me quiere confirmar la licencia, que tengo de N.P. General, para ir à las Philipinas; y porque, yò quede sin escrùpulos, y V.R. bien informado, determine, lo que fuere para mayor honra de Dios, propondrè à V.R. los motivos, que me mueven, para ir à Philipinas.

Un año antes de entrar en la Compañia, tube una muy grave enfermedad, y en ella mas me afligia el no poder entrar en la Compañia, que la misma enfermedad. Y estando con esta afliccion, un dia de Nuestra Señora de las Nieves, supliqué à la Santissima Virgen delante de una Imagen suya, me alcanzase de su hijo Santissimo salud, para que yò pudiesse entrar en la Compañia, y ir à las Indias, para predicar à los Indios el Santo Evangelio: y desde este dia con admiracion de los Medicos, tuve salud, con la qual pude entrar en la Compañia. Y aviendo entrado en ella, en el Noviciado, me diò Dios nuestro Señor muy grandes, y eficazes deseos de ir à las Indias, y para mejor saber si era esto la voluntad de Dios, propuse ir à las Indias, si en acabando mis estudios, Dios nuestro Señor me conservaba los deseos, y estos en mi crecian cada dia.

Y aora cinco años, dia de S. Francisco Xavier, tuve tan grandes deseos de ir à las Indias, que me obligaron à hazer un voto al Santo, y otro à la Santissima Virgen, para que me alcanzasen de su Magestad, me declarase su Divina voluntad, y me quitase estos deseos, sino era voluntad suya, que yò fuese à las Indias. Y por espacio de tres años estube pidiendo este mismo à Dios nuestro Señor, y haciendo muchas penitencias, hasta

*que al fin de ellos, el dia de nuestro Padre San Ignacio, dando gracias despues de la Comunión, rogando à Dios por intercesion del Santo, me declarase su voluntad; oí en mi corazon una voz, en que me decia nuestro Padre San Ignacio: **Que hiziera voto de ir à las Indias, en acabando mis estudios, que esta era la voluntad de Dios.** Mas yò todavia no me determinaba à hazerlo, y el dia de nuestra Señora de las Nieves, suplicando esto mismo à la Santisima Virgen, dando gracias despues de comulgar (como fue esto, yò no sè decirlo) lo que sè decir es, que yò oi interiormente estas voces, hablándome esta poderosisima Señora: **Hijo, haz voto de ir à las Indias; porque quiere mi Hijo Santisimo, que vayas à ellas, que para esto te dió salud este dia por mi intercesion.** Y aunque todavia no me determinaba à hazerlo, proseguí haciendo muchas penitencias, encomendándolo à Dios, hasta que en el dia de la Asumpcion de nuestra Señora, casi moralmente necesitado por las muchas consolaciones espirituales, que mi alma sentia, hize voto de ir à las Indias en acabando mis estudios, y desde este punto hasta oy tengo tan grandes deseos de poner este voto en ececucion, que no siente mi corazon mayor gusto, sino quando me imagino estar entre los Indios.*

*He escrito à V.R. con tanta extension; porque juzgo tener obligacion à hazerlo asi, para que V.R. informado de los motivos, que me mueven, para ir à las Indias, determine lo que fuere para mayor honra de Dios nuestro Señor. Y si V.R. **his non obstantibus**, no me dexare cumplir esta licencia, que tengo de nuestro Padre General, sepa V.R. que en el dia del juycio, quando Dios nuestro Señor me tomare cuenta, de lo que aqui he referido, la respuesta, que yò tengo de dar à su Divina Magestad, ha de ser la que V.R. me diere à esta carta, y con esta intencion me la ha de firmar V.R. para que yò me quede en esta Provincia sin escrúpulos. Yò escribo à los quatro Consultores esto mismo, y asi me hará V.R. favor de consultarlo segunda vez, para que bien informados, determinen, lo que fuere para mayor honra de Dios, que me guarde à V.R. muchos años.*

Montilla, 27 de Abril de 1666.

Siervo de V.R.

Luys de Medina.

Translation

Peace of Christ.

Fr. Provincial,

I find myself with many scruples, because Y.R. does not wish to confirm the licence that I have from our Fr. General to go to the Philippines; and because, in order for me to get rid of my scruples, and for Y.R. to decide, after having been well informed, whatever is for the greater honor of God, I will place before Y.R. the reasons that incite me to go to the Philippines.

One year before I joined the Society, I fell very seriously ill; during this illness, I was more concerned with not being able to join the Society than about the illness itself. While I was so afflicted, one day, on the feast of Our Lady of the Snows, I beseeched the Most Holy Virgin before one of her images, to get health for me from her Most

Holy Son, so that I might join the Society, and go to the Indies to preach the Holy Gospel to the Indians. As of that day, to the surprise of the physicians, I regained my health, and so I was able to join the Society. Having joined the Society, in the Novitiate, God our Lord gave me very great and powerful desires to go to the Indies, and in order to know better if that was God's will, I promised to go to the Indies at the end of my studies, if God our Lord would keep these desires within me; the desires kept growing in me every day.

Five years later, on the feast of St. Francis Xavier, I felt such great desires to go to the Indies, that they forced me to make a vow to the Saint, and another to the Most Holy Virgin, so that they would get for me from his Divine Majesty, or to remove those desires from me, unless it were His will that I went to the Indies. During three years I kept making the same prayer to God our Lord, and making many penances until we came to the feast of our Father St. Ignatius, when I was giving thanks after communion, begging God through the intercession of the Saint to let me know His will; I heard in my heart a voice, by which our Father St. Ignatius was telling me, that I should make a vow to go to the Indies at the end of my studies, that such was the will of God. However, I did not yet decide to do so, and on the day of Our Lady of the Snows, while I was begging the Most Holy Virgin for the same thing, while giving thanks after communion; what happened next, I do not know how, but what I know is that I heard these voices within me, and it was the voice of this most powerful Lady: "Son, make the vow to go to the Indies, because my Most Holy Son wishes you to go there, and it was the reason for which He gave you health that day through my intercession." Although I still did not decide myself to do so, I continued making many penances, commending the matter to God, until the feast day of the Assumption of our Lady, when I was almost morally forced by the many spiritual favors that I felt in my soul, and I did make the vow of going to the Indies at the end of my studies; from that point until now I have held such great desires to carry out this vow that my heart cannot conceive a better outcome than imagining myself among the Indians.

I have written to Y.R. so extensively, because I think I must do so, in order for Y.R. to be informed about the reasons that incite me to go to the Indies, and then decide what would be best for the honor of God our Lord. Nevertheless, would Y.R. have some objections, preventing me from carrying out the licence that I hold from our Fr. General, Y.R. should also know that on Judgment Day, when God our Lord will take my account of the matter referred to herein, the answer that I intend to give His Divine Majesty will be the one that Y.R. will give me in his letter, and that is what Y.R. should have in mind when writing it, so that I will be able to stay in this Province without scruples. I write the same thing to the four Consultants, and Y.R. will do me the favor of holding a second consultation, so that, being well informed, they will decide what will be for the greater honor of God, whom I beg to keep Y.R. alive for many more years.

Montilla, 27 April 1666.

Y.R.'s servant,

Luis de Medina.