
Document 1663E

Letter from Fr. Sanvitores to Fr. Juan Gabriel Guillén, dated Taytay 22 July 1663

Sources: ARSI Phil. 13, fol. 1-4; copy in the 26 Martyrs' Museum, Nagasaki, Japan.

Note: Fr. Guillén was then teaching theology at the Jesuit College in Salamanca.

Original in Spanish

Copia de una carta del Pe. Diego Luis de Sanvitores escrita en Philippinas a 22 de Julio de 1663.

Por la que escribí el mes de Julio pasado de 62 desde el Puerto de Lampong destas islas Philipinas, savria V.R^a la felicidad, con que se servio N.Sr. (por su Santissima M[adr]e, y S[an]tos P[adr]es n[uest]ros Ignacio, Francisco Xavier, y Luis Gonzaga, quien tambien fue Patron del viaje, por cogernos su fiesta en el mar) traernos a estas islas. En todos fue de gran consuelo el socorro no esperado en desquite del que se esperaba, y no llego de la nao, que avia salido destas Islas para la Nueva España, como suele, y no se sabe aun della sobre la arribada de otros dos años antes, con que estaban estas Islas en suma apretura, y necesidad de todo socorro, y mas con la insolente amenaza del Pumpuan Chino. En nuestros Padres fue singular la alegria por el nuevo socorro de compañeros, que ayudassen a la mucha mies de almas, que nuestros esperaba; a pocos dias tuvimos en el Puerto al Pe. Procurador General de la Provincia con un muy buen refresco, y muchas demostraciones de caridad, y no fué la menor el trabajo que tuvo en salir a recibarnos hasta aquel puerto con tres dias de camino a pie por riscos, y lodaçales insondables en aquel tiempo de aguas (que esto especial tienen los que entran en estas islas por este Puerto de Lampong, a donde aportamos por mas seguro de enemigos, que la 1^a entrada es una subida del Cielo): al fin con la buena guia del Padre Procurador, y dulce consideracion, de quienes ibamos en seguimiento de las ovejas de Xpo nro. Sr., que especialmente en esta tierra se nos huyen a los montes, pasamos los tres dias de camino sin ningun azar, hasta una laguna celebre en estas islas cercada de pue-

*blos de Indios Tagalos administrados por la mayor parte de Padres Descalzos de S. Francisco: y en una destas dotrinas tuvimos el primer recebimiento con notable agasajo, y caridad destos Santos Reliligosos [sic], y demostraciones de alegria en los Indios de sus danças, y musicas, p^a lo qual tienen especial gracia, y pueden competir en voz, y destreza con los buenos musicos de España, y cantan en español sin entender lo que cantan con tanta claridad, y sentido, como si fueran Castellanos; pero lo que da especial devocion es oirles cantar en su lengua una Salve, que siempre que la oigo me acuerdo no sin especial dulçura de la Profecia de la Santissima Virgen. **Ecce est beatam me dicent omnes generationes.***

*En la laguna, y rio de Manila fue el principal recebimiento de innumerables embarcaciones de todos los pueblos, todos de fiestas, musica, y parabienes, que en verdad aprovecha el acordarnos dello para no desdecir en los progresos del fruto de las almas, que nos anunciaban aquellas primeras aclamaciones. En Manila fuimos recibidos con el **Te Deum laudamus** ayudandonos todos a dar las devidas gracias a N.Sr. de tan feliz viaje. Llegamos buenos, y sanos todos los 15 que aviamos salido de Mexico. La dificultad del camino por tierra desde el puerto la desconto N.Sr. con el havernos librado del riesgo en la entrada de las islas por mar hasta el puerto principal de Cavite, que padecio poco despues el navio **S. Damian**, en que veniamos: por que quiriendo llevarle desde el puerto de Lampong [fol. 1 verso] al de Cavite se perdio con un mal temporal entre las Islas cerca de Cavite, aunque no murio sino una persona de los pobres marineros que solos iban ya en el. Gracias a N.Sr.*

Despues de reparados en Manila corporal, y espiritualmente con unos fervorosos exercicios, han ido prosiguido sus estudios los que no los avian acabado. Los demas se repartieron en breve por varias dotrinas, o pueblos p^a aprender lengua, y empezar a dotrinar estos pobres Indios. Los que fueron a Pintados, o Prov^a de Bisayas tuvieron luego buen estreno de su fervor con un muy trabajoso viaje de temporal, y de enemigos Moros, que infestan estas Islas. Nuestro buen P. Juan Blas de Mura, y otro compañero Valenciano Juan Baut^a Gil se dieron buena maña, y con el favor de Dios, y sus pies escaparon por aquellos montes, y tambien otro Padre mas antiguo. El que dio en manos de los enemigos fue un Angelito de la Prov^a de Castilla[:] Andres Bentura de Barrena, cautivaronle los Moros de Jolo. Ha causado grande ternura una carta, que escribe en un pedazo de papel colorado significando no menos la conformidad, y aliento, que Nro. Sr. le da en su cautiverio que lo duro, y lastimoso del, tratase con todo calor del rescate con la mucha caridad del Padre Provincial y demas Padres y esperamos nos le bolvera Dios, a que logre sus fervores con mas fruto de las almas; que aora como no sabe aun la lengua no puede aun lo poco, que le dieran lugar en su cautiverio: pero despues de todo esto no falta quien le embidia, el que sea el primero, que ha probado este dulce fruto de los prisiones por ir a predicar la fe de Nro. Sr. Jesu Xpo, de los 15 que venimos.

Yo hasta aora estoy en lo mas seguro, y aproposito p^a aprender lengua, en este pueblo de Taytay de Indios (que aca sino es en Manila no se hallan Españoles). Esta seys leguas de Manila: es Ministro aqui el Padre Miguel Solana, que aca no tienen otro

descanso los que han sido Provinciales, y servido mucho, sino servir mas, y trabajar muy bien en la enseñanza destos pobres Indios. El mismo Padre me pidió por compañero para que aprendiesse lengua, que es la mayor caridad, que se puede hacer a un nuevo, para que exercite luego el fin a que Dios le trae. Y assi lo va disponiendo Nro. Sr. con su acostumbrada suavidad, y eficacia contra la comun persuasion, que temian todos, quando llegue a Manila, de que me avian de ocupar en leer &c: que aunque este ministerio tambien es muy de las almas en esta tierra: pues no tiene otro resplandor, que el de la gloria de Nro. Sr. en acabar de abilitar p^a los ministerios a los nuestros, y algunos seglares, que puedan ayudar a los Religiosos, que son todos muy pocos p^a las muchas almas que ay: pero aun quando la obediencia ocupe en esto importa mucho tener ya lengua p^a ayudar a los Indios, que, aun en Manila, son siempre la principal cosecha. Al fin Nro. Sr. hace lo que quiere, y con esta oportunidad deste pueblo de Taytay se ha dispuesto lindamente el objeto de atribucion de todas estas idas, y venidas (que ya estamos, en que es el Acto de contricion, y amor deste Buen Dios).

Apenas empeze a estudiar los nominativos desta lengua Tagala (que es la principal de estas Islas) quando por exercicio de lengua hice traducir a unos Indios ladinos el Acto de contricion en la forma del Venerable P. Geronimo Lopez con todas sus sentencias, y Ave Marias, y despues se enmendo de buenas lenguas de los nuestros: y ha sido el total modo de aprender yo la lengua: porque siendo assi, que al principio me estaba suma dificultad el decorar [sic],¹ me tome con mi Acto de contricion de suerte, que en cosa de un mes le aprende y le predique en este pueblo con todos sus tonos, y sentencias; cierto que con mas expedicion, que en Alcala el Español, sin leer el papel, porque la cortedad de la vista no me impida el efecto (aunque las mas vezes llevo el papel, porque se animen otros, que leen bien, como lo hacia el Padre Geronimo Lopez) y la correspondencia de vocablos en la traduccion, que despues he ajustado yo, ha sido mi principal estudio: y assi atribuyo al Acto de contricion la facilidad, que Nro. Sr. me dio luego, para que antes de tres meses de lengua pudiesse confessar corrientemente y predicar, o platicar especialmente en lo que toca a contricion y confession, doctrina Xpiana, y demas materias de mission, en que insistimos singularmente por el voto [fol. 2] que nos trujo a estas tierras. En el ablar ordinario con los Indios va Dios dando con el uso lo que es menester, y quando me allo atajado de palabras me voy a mi Acto de contricion, en que no nos podemos perder. Y en estas tierras especialmente por mas que se repita, y encargue, y instruyan los naturales en como le han de hazer, nada sobra por la mucha importancia porque como ay tanta falta de sacerdotes el remedio de la confession no esta tan a mano, y assi todo el bien destos pobres se ha de librar en un buen Acto de contricion. Atendiendo a esto ha ordenado aora el Padre Provincial que en todas nuestras doctrinas se platique todos los domingos, y se les intruya, y afervorize a los Indios, para que le hagan como le hazen todos juntos en alta voz, guiandolos el

¹ Ed. note: The copy in Nagasaki, which has some very small differences in the text (mostly a word added here and there), had an addition here, which reads as follows: "que es forçoso decorar algo para aprender bien lengua."

Padre. Y lo mismo ha ordenado el Sr. Arçobispo en las dotrinas de sus Ministros, y ha mandado imprimir p^a Españoles; y Tagalas la formula con los 40 dias de indulgencia que ha concedido a imitacion del Sr. Card[enal] de Toledo cuya concesion con su firma me truxe entre mis papeles, y se me ha quedado con ella el Sr. Arçobispo por devocion al Sr. Cardenal.

Lo del Acto de contricion por las calles ha salido mejor, que yo pudiera pensar, que mucho si lo traza otro, que sabe mas que yo, y gusta mas que yo, de que se emprenda este fuego divino de su amor, y se dexa grangear de las Ave Marias del Padre Geronimo Lopez que no cessa alla en el cielo &c. Con los exemplares de España, y Nueva España, que con los que aqui se atienden mas, y el fruto dellos, que se divulgo luego por Manila en el librito de Casos raros, (que impreso en Mexico, y añadido con estos nuevos exemplares paso tambien aca por la mejor mercaderia conforme a la instruccion como Profética que me dio el Padre Geronimo Lopez como V.R^a sabe, y no es decible, ni p^a V.R^a nuevo el fruto que ha hecho en Españoles, e Indios tambien, que ya andan algunos buenos casos traducidos) con este medio pues no fue menester gastar muchos memoriales, aunque el brevecito y sustancial del Padre Geronimo Lopez p^a su Em[inen]ci]a importo mucho aqui p^a los Padres y se persuadieron facilmente assi los de casa como los de fuera, singularmente el Sr. Arçobispo, y el Sr. Governador, que aqui es el primer moble [sic] de qualquiera cosa publica, que era cosa muy santa, y importante, pero despues de todo esto no se huviera conseguido tan a prisa, y con tanta eficacia, y suavidad, a no haver la Providencia de Nro. Sr. dispuesto, que las amenazas insolentes del Pumpuan Chino nos hiciessen acoger al divino socorro.

*Hizose un novenario tomando por Patron deste guerra al gloriossimo Principe S. Miguel especial devocion del Sr. Governador, y del Sr. Arçobispo D. Miguel Poblete, y devocion comun de todos, y p^a los devotos de Nro. Santo Apostol de las Indias muy encargada del Santo especialmente p^a estas Islas en una de las quales sucedio lo del terremoto, y favor del Santo Archangel, que el Santo escribe. Dio luego el Sr. la inspiracion, de que la 1^a batalla avia de ser contra los mayores enemigos dentro de la Ciudad, y que el principal asalto avia de ser por las calles, disparando la pieza de batir corazones, y las balas del artilleria del Arcangel, que fuessen hechando rayos por todas partes, y llevandolo todo a fuego, y a sangre **quien como Dios p^a temido, quien como Dios p^a amado**, y era un juicio de Dios. Las sentencias que salieron con el zelo de los Padres que todos se alentaron a entonarlas, y hacerlas &c. Al fin hizose la 1^a noche del octavario con todas las circunstancias, y forma del Padre Geronimo Lopez, y aunque algunos rezelaban al principio las tinieblas de la noche en Plaça de armas, y de tanta diversidad de naciones se resolvieron a que convenia no omitir esta circuntancia [fol. 2 verso] de la noche (que aunque como escrivi a V.R^a desde Mexico es bueno de día, quando no se puede mas con los que gobierna &a pero siempre que se pueda de noche se añade mucha mocion). No faltó ahora aquella noche de Generales, y Cabos de militia. El Principal de los Generales empezo llevando el Santo Xpo. en nombre de S. Miguel y luego se fueron remudando, y las hachas tambien semejantes personajes. El Sr. Governador embio ocho hachas, y su Señoria creo que assistio en cubierto. El Sr. Arçobis-*

*po nos aguardo en su iglesia, y salio acompañando algun trecho, aunque por haver de predicar en la octava, y ser dañosos estos serenos le obligaron a que se recogiesse a su casa. La mocion no ay que decir pues es **ex opere operato** la que V.R^a sabe en todas partes, que seria con las circunstancias &c. Como salio tan bien la 1^a noche que fue 17 de enero quedaron todos muy animados a repetir (que antes no dexaba de haver sus miedos, y siempre ay prudentes, que por mas exemplares, que aya de otras partes hallan disparidades de tierras: claro es que el Demonio no gusta nada, de que alcancen a tantas partes remedios tan poderosos, que deshagan el poder de sus tinieblas, y pecados, que estiende el por todas partes). Estuvo casi resuelto, que se repitiese en la misma forma todas las noches de aquel octavario; pero al fin se medio mas proporcionadamente, y se resolvió que saliesse tres noches p^a los Españoles dentro de Manila, y las noches de en medio se hiciesse dentro de nuestra iglesia, solamente con un exemplo, que se vino a convertir en platica propia de mission: y el remate del Acto de contricion era una diciplina, que hicieron todos con gran fervor, assiendiendo siempre el Sr. Governador (con que sin querer hubo cumplida mission, que por ser tiempo tan ocupado de prevenciones de guerra no avian salido a ello). Otros tres dias se hizo a los Indios en su lengua en los pueblos, que estan al rededor de la Ciudad, y no es creible lo bien que les ha asentado a los Indios aquel modo de procession, y penetrantes voces, y tonos, que todo se hace puntualmente como en la lengua española.*

*Acabada en Manila la mission del Acto de contricion, que assi la llaman, por instancia de los Señores Governador y Arçobispo se dispuso de la misma suerte en Cavite (que es el puerto principal, y unica poblacion de Españoles en esta Isla fuera de Manila). Salio con la misma mocion, y aun se preciaban los Padres de alla, que avia sido con mas señaladas circunstancias, que en Manila: porque hicimos un cuerpo todas las religiones, que alli ay, Padres Dominicos, Franciscos, Augustinos Recoletos, y de S. Juan de Dios, y todos hechaban sentencias entreverados con nosotros, y hacian su exhortacion quando les tocaba. Señalaronse en el fervor, y gusto, con que le abraçaron los Padres de Santo Domingo, y el Padre Vicario Provincial que se allo alli, era el que mas fuego pegaba con sus saetas de admirable voz, y espiritu: iban leyendo por el papel impreso (que aun duraban los de Alcala) y este Padre y otro muy docto, y siervo de Dios, Regente de sus estudios de Santo Thomas de Manila hicieron el Acto de contricion Apostolicamente. El Santo Xpo le llevo siempre, que no quiso dexarle el Castellano de aquella fuerza. Hizose tres dias: por la noche dentro de los muros, y otra vez a los Indios extra muros. Han quedado todos muy aficionados a este santo exercicio: y esta resuelto se haga una noche cada semana de quaresma, si por las continuas aguas, que apenas dexan andar las calles sino en aquel tiempo, o cerca de quaresma, no se puede hazer entre año. Y lo buen de la suavidad de Dios es que todo esto se origino de una arma falsa: por que el Pumpuan Chino a esta façon ya avia muerto **per modum meriti in spe**, no se si se me han olvidado los terminillos: y aplacado el Buen Señor con tales rogativas detuvo al hijo, que no prosiguiesse en los intentos de su Padre. Antes ha embiado embaxador de paz, y se esta ajustando. Nro. Sr. lo lleve adelante.*

Todos los Padres de aca han tomado con gran fervor esto del Acto de contricion. El Padre Provincial Ignacio Zapata lo solicito instantemente. El Padre Rector Rafael de Bonafe lo dispuso inmediatamente todo, y canto sus sentencias y llevo la campanilla, y lo mismo el Padre Rector de Cavite Luis Espineli, que le hizo con mucho espiritu. El Padre Nicolas Cani hombre Apostolico se muere de Santa embidia de que no avia [fol. 3] él visto esta traça. El Padre Xavier Riquelme de nuestra Provincia de Tol^o se señalo mucho, y el Padre Francisco Combes (uno y otro Maestros de 1^a de esta universidad, antecesor y presente) y el Padre Combes en todos los sermones que hizo la quaresma remato siempre con Acto de contricion muy fervorosamente. A todo esto ayudan los exemplares de los Maestros de Alcala, y Salamanca. Gracias a Dios, que ya que no pueden venir por aca, ni estar en tantas partes, a quantas les lleva el amor de N.Sr. Jesu Xpo, y de las almas, que redimio, haciendo lo que pueden en las partes donde estan alcançan a otras muchas con su exemplo: digale V.R^a a nro. Maestro el Padre Rivadanera que Santa Barbara, que Santa Ines lo hacen muy bien por aca, y espero no se descuidan por alla en ayudarnos a cumplir nuestro concierto, y voto. Y por lo que dixe de Santa Ines, la devocion que el Padre Rivadanera me pego, me ha hecho mirar con especiales ojos una mission, que esta dedicada a esta Santa aqui en estos montes, donde andan muchos Indios Gentiles, huyendo de los Españoles, y me estoy ya disponiendo p^a salir unos dias a caça, quando me lo mandaren, que me han insinuado sera presto, y voy con grande aliento en la intercession de la Santa Pastora, que era trayendo estas ovejas al aprisco del Buen Pastor &c. No ay sino proseguir por alla con oraciones, y exemplos, consejos, y cartas de lo que se hace de misiones, y Acto de contricion, y obra pia de S. Ignacio y S. Xavier, que ya he dicho que todo ayuda aun a los muy distantes. El empleo de por aca es todo en la dotrina destos pobres Indios: con Españoles ay algo tambien, y lo que ay es bien importante p^a que no desayuden ellos a la dotrina de los Indios con sus exemplos.

*Assi nuestros Padres que ay muy fervorosos trabajan lindamente a todas manos, en cuya ayuda pasaremos con nuestros Actos de contricion, y misiones que Dios dispone hasta que se sirva su Magestad de otra cosa. Hasta aora me tienen muy en descanso y seguridad de peligros, que ay no pocos en las dotrinas que llaman de Bisayas, y fuera del Padre mi compañero, que dixe nos cautivaron, han robado estos dias a muchos de nuestros Padres, quemadoles las Iglesias, y uno dellos es el Padre Francisco Fernandez (que aqui llaman Francisco Manuel) dicipulo del Padre Rivadanera de Artes, y siempre un Angel. Es de gran ternura una carta que escribe del destrozo de su pueblo, e iglesia é injurias de un Santo Crucifixo, que le quebraron, y ultrajaron los Moros, que son solos los enemigos, que ay por aca, fuera del Chino, queria romper aora guerra, y Dios le mato rabiendo, y mordiendose las manos, de que se le atajassen sus intentos. Misericordia le hizo Dios en embiarle al infierno antes que tuviesse mas que pagar, aunque no sera poco. Este Chino no es el Emperador de la China, que esse es Tartaro, el otro es hijo de uno de aquellos Ladrones, que escribe el Padre Martin Martinez en su **Bello Tartarico** y quito la Isla Hermosa a los Olandeses, y con otras Islas, y Chinos que se le juntaron cobro el poder, y soberbia, que mostro en la carta que escribio a Manila pi-*

diendo tributo y amenazando, como se verra alla en las cartas, que fueron de estas Islas el año pasado. Al fin Dios confunde a los sobervios. El consuelo que ay en estas guerras destas Islas es, que todas son contra los enemigos de Dios, y los peligros que se padecen son por conservar esta Xpiandad.

[Description of the Philippines]

*De las calidades de estas Islas se dice mucho en las Historias. Lo que yo puedo decir de mi experiencia hasta aora es, que el sustento, y socorros temporales son los que bastan por tener salud, y fuerzas en el divino servicio: y aun mis dientes se acomodan mejor [fol. 3 verso] con el pan desta tierra, que es arroz hecho **Morisqueta** (que llaman) cocido con solo agua, que se consume, hasta que da como un arroz con leche muy espeso. Vino de uvas es reliquia para las misas, pero no le hechan menos los que beben el de la tierra[,] de palmas o cocos; y menos los que se hacen a beber solo agua, que no es muy dificultoso. Los **Babuis**, o puercos de la tierra, y bacas, que han traído los Españoles suplen bastantemente por el carnero. El temple no es tan caluroso como yo le avia imaginado: pues estoy en que el mayor calor de aqui no llega al ordinario del verano de Sevilla, ni al de los caniculares de Madrid, y el mas ordinario temple es como el de un verano templado de España, aunque se suda mas por la humedad: tal vez hace frio pero no mucho. Los recién venidos suelen padecer la prueba de la tierra, y assi todos mis compañeros han tenido esta prueba; solo de mi dicen que soy el valiente, que hemos de hacer gracias a Dios, que desde aquella enfermedad del Abril de 59 en Madrid, no se que es un dolor de cabeza, ni accidente de mudanças de mar ni tierra en tan largo viaje: sino ay otras pruebas despues poco nos fian. Pero desto de temples, y comodidades, no ay que decir, sino que por mas que se alabe esto, quien viniere aca por ellas se hallara burlado y a quien no las buscasen le sobrarian, y solo se allara con consuelo el que se pusiese en hacer sola la voluntad de Dios por medio de la santa obediencia y ayudar siquiera a que se conserve esta Xpiandad, y el cuerpo de la Religion que tanto fruto hace en estas almas, con el ministerio que le mandasen, aunque sea de ser Ministro (como lo es aora, aunque de prestado el Padre Francisco Salgado, un sugeto de grandes prendas que vino con nosotros de la Provincia de Castilla) o Maestro de Gramatica que tambien le ay en Manila, pero solo en Manila ay Ministro y Maestros, y estos mismos en aprendiendo lengua tienen buen empleo de Indios. Catanas, y Martyrios nos se hallan luego, ni nos hemos de poner en ellos hasta que el Sr. nos ponga, y regarle que sea despues de llevarle muchas almas al cielo, p^a que se augmente mas de gloria, que es la unica laureola, digna de todo deseo.*

Lo que toca a los naturales desta tierra se dicen que se aplican muy bien a las cossas de nuestra santa fe, y costumbres Christianas: En el entendimiento y modo de aprenderlas hacen ventaxa a lo ordinario de la gente de los pueblos pequeños de Castilla, y en la voluntad y devocion tambien les hacen ventaxa los que estan asistidos continuamente de los Padres, como los que yo he comunicado en estas dotrinas de Tagalos: que es para dar mil vendiciones a Dios ver que lo que no aun cien años que era una selva inculta de gentilidad y campo de cosechas del Demonio, este echo un paraíso de

tantas plantas y miesses que es que el Señor cada día para su gloria: al fin tantas almas que se fueran al infierno se salvan por la piedad de nuestros Catolicos Reyes que con tantos gastos de solicitud &a ban embiado tantos ministros del evangelio a estas tierras, assi pudieran venir mas para que pudieran asistir mexor a estas almas tan preciosas en los ojos de Dios como las que nacen en España, y para que se pudiesen estender a otras innumerables almas que se pierden en estas tierras vecinas de gentiles y moros redimidos tambien con la sangre de nuestro Señor Jesu Christo. Fuera tambien del socorro de obreros porque claman en la gran China y de la ysla Hermossa piden aora tambien, y no hai para repartir por la falta que aqui se hace y de Japon no faltan esperanças [sic], lo menos dicen que admiten ia que vuelban los Christianos naturales de Japon que estaban desterrados aunque con la poca comunicacion y falta de comercio con los estrangeros Catolicos no se save aun nada de cierto, pero al fin sin duda se ha dejar Dios vencer de las ancias y ruegos de S. Francisco Xavier [fol. 4] que han de poder mas que nuestros pecados que no deven de acer poca g[u]jerra[.] ojala se vençan y cessen estos primero y no sea que alguno de los que vinieron en este ultimo socorro lo hechemos a perder &a.

[Prayers in Tagalog]

Porque sera consuelo de los devotos del Acto de contricion, remito esse traslado en la forma que se ha echo en la lengua Tagala y lo que toca a la exortacion es traduccion puntual del del Benerable Padre Geronimo Lopez y muchas de las sentencias tambien: Otras son particulares para lo particular de los Indios: tienen todas su metro que tambien le usaban estos tagolas [sic], y aunque algunas de las asonancias coinciden con los verssos Castellanos, pero ellas tienen su especial asonancia propia esta lengua. Ba en caracteres españoles, ya los usan los mismos Tagalos, porque los suios propios aun para ellos son mui escabrossos de leer, porque son al modo de los [h]ebreos que una misma diction tiene varias liciones [=lecciones], aun despues de los puntos de que tambien usan, la lengua es verdaderamente dificultossa sin parentesco alguno con las de Europa; pero las de aca convienen en mucho entressi [=entre sí], solo a la [h]ebrea se parece algo pero pues yo con mi poca habilidad puedo ia administrar corrientemente, y ablar todo lo que es menester para la salvacion destos pobres quien no se alentara con la gracia de Nro Señor y [el] Acto de contricion: no es convidar esto al que Dios no llamare sin quitar el estorvo que puede ofrecersse alguno de aprender nuevas lenguas, pero claro es que si Dios llama otros maiores estorvos sabra quitar. Fuera de que aun en nuestras dotrinas ai otra lengua, que llaman Visaya que viene a ser esta tagala quitadas las impertinencias a esta, a la qual han recurrido los que no han podido salir con la Tagala. Al fin viniendo con vocacion de Dios esto es con unico desseo de haçer su santissima voluntad declarada con la segurissima vos de la santa obediencia informado el Superior de los impulsos e inspiraciones interiores de todas las dificultades saldra bien y con ganancia: Pues la voluntad de Dios suavissima y eficacissima claro es que ha de sacar bien de todo, y convertir todos los males en maior bien: pero es bien tener assentado que no todos les desseos de Indias los da Dios para que se cumplan en Indias, que

muchos son para que se hagan Indias los ministerios de Europa, como dixo y executo mexor el Sancto Padre Carrafa nuestro general[.] la lastima fuera que el que dessea estas Indias que no tiene malogre las que tiene entre manos y que pudiera lograr con tanto fructo de misiones, Actos de contricion y demas ministerios de la Comp^a y verdaderamente para las proprias misiones de pueblo en pueblo mas ocassion ay aun en Europa, de que les servira esta ocassion al que por su culpa y falta [fol. 4 verso] de celo de las almas no la logra ni dispone que la logren otros pudiendo; pero los de aca con mas necesarias por la maior falta de sacerdotes, y aun puede ser que el Acto de contricion, que es el medio y fin de todo, facilite aca tambien las misiones aun fuera de los pueblos de nuestros dotrinas; que ya sin reparo de los religiosos sino con mucho gusto suio, se ha echo en pueblos de sus dotrinas como de padres Franciscos y Recoletos &a. Al fin la voluntad de Dios que quiere a unos aqui y a otros ay [=allí] y que es dueño de toda la viña es la que ha de determinar a unas v otras Misiones por los medios que nos dexo en la santa Religion, vendita sea, para conocerla con seguridad. Oxala enteramente la cumplamos.¹

En lo demas me remito a las cartas de Nro Santo Xavier, que estan de mejor letra. Aun no ha llegado la nao en que esperamos a nuestros compañeros. El Sr. los traiga con bien, y guarde a V.R^a abrasado en su amor, que nos abraze a todos.

Taytay junto a Manila Julio 22 de 1663.

Siervo de V.R^a

+

+ Diego Luis de Sanvitores +

[Endorsement, in Latin:] Philippinarum 1663. Exemplar literarum P. Didaci Aloysij de San Vitores. Refert suum, sociorum que navigantium, et in Philippinas adventum.

1 Ed. note: The Nagasaki copy has one additional paragraph here, as follows: "Tambien embio esos papeles que se an impreso aqui para el familiar uso deste divino exercicio de contricion; por los que van en español se conocera lo que continen los de lengua Tagala que viene a ser la misma substancia, y en los pequeñitos con añadido, oraciones a la Virgen Santissima, a S. Ignacio, y S. [Francisco] Xavier. La de la Virgen Santissima es el mismo remate del Acto de contricion del Padre Geronimo Lopez: *Virgen Santissima pedid que me quite la vida*, etc. que se a aplicado tambien p^a decirla todos los Domingos en la Iglesia con el Acto de contricion breve. Las de S. Ignacio, y S. Xavier son las mismas de la Iglesia: *Deus, qui ad maiorem y Deus, qui glorificastis*. Adios, remitome a la otra carta que va con esta p^a lo particular etc. y encomiendas, y mas a las cartas de Nuestro Santo Xavier..."

Translation

Copy of a letter from Fr. Diego Luis de Sanvitores written in the Philippines on 22 July 1663.

From the letter which I wrote in July 1662 from the port of Lampong of these Philippine Islands, Y.R. would have learned the success that our Lord (through His Blessed Mother, our Saintly Fathers Ignatius, Francisco Xavier and Luis Gonzaga, who was also a patron saint of the voyage, as his feast-day found us at sea) was pleased to give to our voyage to the Philippine Islands. The unexpected succor, compared to the one that had been expected, was a great consolation for everyone; it was not brought by the galleon that had left these Islands for New Spain, as usual, and she has not yet been heard from, to add to the return in distress of the previous two years. So, these Islands were in great fix, and need of succor, specially on account of the insolent threat of Pampuan, the Chinese. Our Fathers were particularly pleased with the new succor of companions, to help with the large harvest of souls that our people hope. Within a few days we had among us at the port the Fr. Procurator General of the Province in person, with a very good refreshment, and many demonstrations of charity. The hardship that he went through to come to that port to welcome us was not small; it takes three days on foot through rocky areas and unfathomable muddy spots in that rainy season (that is what those who come in through the port of Lampong must face, and we made port there because it was safe from enemies, whereas the first entrance channel would have meant a direct ascent to Heaven). Finally, with the Fr. Procurator as our good guide, and his sweet disposition, we all followed him like the sheep of Christ our Lord. We spent three days on the road without any danger, since the people of this land flee from us to the bush. Then we came to a lake that is famous in these Islands [i.e. Laguna de Bay], which is surrounded by towns of Tagalog Indians who are administered for the most part by discalced Franciscan Fathers. In one of these mission stations we were received with singular treatment, and charity on the part of these holy Religious, and with demonstrations of joy on the part of the Indians with their dances and music, for which they are specially graceful and can compete in singing and dexterity with good musicians in Europe. They sing in Spanish without understanding what they sing with such clarity, and feeling, as if they were Spaniards. However, what is specially moving is to hear them sing a Salve in their language; every time I hear it, I remember with singular tenderness the Prophecy of the Blessed Virgin: *Ecce est beatam me dicent omnes generationes*. [All generations will tell me: Here is the blessed one].

In the lake and river of Manila we met with the main welcoming celebrations, with numberless boats from all the towns, all the feasts, music, and congratulations. In truth, it is sufficient for us to remember this in order not to be out of harmony with the progress of the fruit in souls that those first acclamations made us hope for. In Manila we were received with the *Te Deum laudamus* as everyone helped us to give thanks to our Lord for our prosperous voyage. All 15 of us who had left Mexico arrived in good health. Our Lord took into account the difficulty of the route overland from the port,

as He delivered us from the risk of coming into the islands by sea as far as the main port of Cavite, a risk that was run afterwards by the ship **San Damian** aboard which we had come; as they were taking it from the port of Lampong to that of Cavite, it was lost during a bad storm among the islands that are near Cavite, although only one person died among the poor seamen aboard. Thanks to the Lord!

After a corporal rest in Manila, and a spiritual rest with some fervent exercises, those who had not finished their studies went on to pursue them. The rest were soon distributed among various mission stations, or towns, to learn the language, and begin to instruct these poor Indians. Those who were sent to the Visayas, or Province of the Pintados, soon had their fervor put through its first performance when they went through a very difficult journey, on account of a storm and enemy Moros who infest these Islands. Our good Fr. Juan Blas de Mura, and another companion from Valencia, Juan Bautista Gil, managed, with God's help, to escape on foot through those interior hills, along with another older Father. The one who fell into the hands of the enemies was a young angel from the Province of Castile: Andrés Ventura de Barrena; he was captured by Moros from Jolo. One letter, which he wrote on a piece of colored paper, has caused great sympathy. In it he mentions the acceptance and courage that our Lord gave him during his captivity. Feeling sorry for him, the charitable Fr. Provincial and other Fathers are trying very hard to rescue him. We hope that God will bring him back to us, in the interest of more fruit of souls, because now, as he does not know the language yet, he cannot do much of anything, even if his status as a captive allowed it; however, after all of this there is no lack of others to envy him, for being the first who has tasted this sweet fruit of captivity as a result of preaching the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, among the 15 of us in our band.

As for myself, I am now in the safest, and most appropriate, place to learn the language, in this Indian town of Taytay (unlike Manila where Spaniards are to be found). It is 6 leagues from Manila. The Fr. Minister here is Fr. Miguel Solana; the former Provincials here, even in retirement after a long service, have to serve more, and work at teaching these poor Indians. The Father himself asked me to become his companion in order to learn the language; this is the most charitable act that can be done to a newcomer, to give him a chance to practice what God has brought him for. Thus our Lord is arranging things with His usual sweetness and effectiveness, against the common belief that we all shared, upon arriving at Manila, that we would be assigned some studies, etc., although the ministry in this country is very much oriented toward the souls. In fact, it has no other brilliant purpose than the glory of our Lord, that is, to make our people completely ready for the ministries, along with a few secular companions, being trained to assist the Religious, who are too few to take care of so many souls. However, even when obedience intervenes in this, it is important to have knowledge of the language to be able to help the Indians, who, even in Manila, are always the main harvest. In the end, our Lord does what He wishes, and with this opportunity of this town of Taytay, it fits prettily into the purpose of attribution of all these comings and goings

(in which we found ourselves already, with the Act of Contrition, and the love of this good Lord).

I had hardly begun to study the words of this Tagalog language (which is the main one of these Islands) when, as an exercise of language, I asked some bilingual Indians to translate the Act of Contrition, in the form introduced by the Venerable Fr. Gerónimo Lopez, with all its sentences, and Hail Marys, and then the text was improved by our people. It became a complete way for me to learn the language, because, at the beginning, as I was having a great difficulty with memorizing,¹ I undertook to memorize my Act of Contrition, so well that within one month I knew it and preached it in this town with all its intonations, and sentences; I did it with even better delivery than I did with the Spanish version in Alcalá, without reading the text, as my short-sightedness would have prevented the effect (although I carried the paper with me most of the time, in case others, who read well, might be willing to read it, as Father Gerónimo Lopez used to do). I made it the subject of my study to match the words in the translation with those of the original, and later on I made some [minor] adjustments. That is why I attribute to the Act of Contrition the ease which our Lord gave me later, since, in less than 3 months, I was able to hear confessions regularly and to preach, or give lessons, specially regarding matters related to contrition and confession, the Christian doctrine, and other missionary subject matters, upon which we place much emphasis on account of the vow that brought us to these countries. Regarding the ordinary conversation with the Indians, God is giving me the usage that is necessary, and when I find myself tongue-tied, I go back to my Act of Contrition, so that we cannot get lost. It is specially true in these countries that, no matter how many times the natives are told, urged, and taught what to do, nothing survives no matter how important, because the remedy of confession is not so handy for the great lack of priests, so, nothing but good can come to these poor peoples if they can get deliverance through a good Act of Contrition. In this connection, Father Provincial has now ordered that in all our mission stations the Indians are to receive explanations, instructions, and exhortations [about it] every Sunday, and to have them repeat it together aloud, as they do, under the guidance of the Father. The Lord Archbishop has ordered the same thing to be done in the mission stations under his Ministers, and he has ordered printed for Spaniards, and for Tagalogs the formula with the 40 days of indulgence granted in imitation of the Lord Cardinal of Toledo, whose concession, signed by him, I had brought among my papers, and the Lord Archbishop has honored me with it, as he is devoted to the Lord Cardinal.

With regards to the Act of Contrition through the streets, the practice has had better results that I had expected. Someone else who knows it better, and likes it better, could write better about the divine fire that is set by his love, as can be gauged by the Hail Marys of Father Gerónimo Lopez who does not cease there in Heaven, etc. Using the examples from Spain, and New Spain, which are those mostly used here, and the

1 Ed. note: The copy in Nagasaki adds the following phrase: "Some memorization is necessary for one to learn a language well."

fruit from them, resulting from the publication throughout Manila of the booklet of Rare Cases (printed in Mexico, with additions of these new examples, it was received here also as the best merchandise, in accordance with the prophetic-like instruction given to me by Father Gerónimo Lopez, as Y.R. knows, and I cannot tell you enough about the new fruit gathered among Spaniards, and Indians alike, now that a few translated cases are in circulation). Indeed, this way it was not necessary to waste time with many memorials, although the small but substantial brief by Father Gerónimo Lopez that had much to do to convince his Eminence had the same effect here with the Fathers; they were easily convinced, not only those at home, but also those outside, specially the Archbishop, and the Governor who is the prime mover of anything public here. It was something very sacred, and important, but after all, it would not have been obtained so quickly, and with such effectiveness and sweetness, had not the providence of our Lord arranged for the insolent threats of Pumpuan the Chinese to make us have recourse to divine help.

A novena was made and the most glorious Prince St. Michael was taken as patron saint in this war. He is a special devotion of the Governor, and of the Archbishop, Don Miguel Poblete, and a common devotion of everyone, and for the devotees of our holy Apostle of the Indies, there was a sign from the saint, one of special significance for these Islands, that of an earthquake, and a favor received from the holy Archangel, about which the Saint has written. Afterwards, the Lord gave the inspiration that the first battle should be fought against the bigger enemies within the City, and that the first assault ought to take place in the streets, by firing the field-piece to ram the hearts, and the balls of the artillery of the Archangel, that were to blast everything and set everything on fire, and bloody: **He who learns to fear God, learns to love God**, and it was a judgment of God. Everyone breathed out the sentences voiced by the Fathers in their zeal, and did them, etc. In short, the first night of the novena took place with all the circumstances, and form used by Father Gerónimo Lopez, and although a few at the beginning were distrustful of the darkness of the night in the main square, and the great diversity of nationalities, they decided that it was convenient to take this circumstance of the night in stride (which, although it is good in the daytime, as I wrote Y.R. from Mexico, when one cannot do otherwise with those in charge, etc. but always, whenever it is possible at night, there is always a procession). On the night in question, there were no lack of Generals, and officers of the militia. The top General began by carrying the cross on behalf of St. Michael, and then they were relaying themselves at it, and similar persons did the same with the candles. The Governor sent 8 candles, and I believe that His Lordship attended undercover. The Archbishop waited for us in his church, and came out to accompany us for a short distance, although, since he had to preach during the novena and these damp airs are harmful, they forced him to retire to his house. I do not have to describe the procession, since Y.R. knows from personal experiences what happens everywhere under similar circumstances, etc. Since the first night, which was 17 January [1663], came out so well, everyone was left excited and looking forward to the next (beforehand, there were some who had their fears, there

are always some cautious ones, no matter how many examples can be taken from other places, they find external factors such as different countries: it is clear that the Devil likes nothing that might bring such powerful remedies to so many places, and undo the power of his darkness, and the sins which he spreads all over the place). It was also agreed that the exercise should be repeated every night of that eight-day period the same way, but in the end it was judged more appropriate to go out three nights for the Spaniards within Manila, and on in-between nights to have it inside our church, only with one example, which eventually was converted into a proper missionary sermon, and the end of the Act of Contrition was a discipline, which everyone did with great fervor, the Governor being always in attendance (the involuntary result being a full-fledged mission, one that they would not otherwise have had time to attend, on account of the preparations for war that were going on). On three other days, it took place among the Indians in their language and in their towns, that surround the City, complete with penetrating voices, and chants, exactly the same as is done in the Spanish language.

Once the mission of the Act of Contrition, as they called it, was over in Manila, as a result of requests made by both the Governor and the Archbishop, it was arranged the same way for Cavite (which is the main port, and the only colony of Spaniards in this Island outside of Manila). It went out with the same procession, and the Fathers overthere even boasted that it was done under more splendid circumstances than in Manila, because all the Religious formed a single body: Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinian Recollects, and those of St. John of God, and all of them gave out sentences mixed with ours, and gave their exhortations when it was their turn to do so. The Dominican Fathers stood out by their fervor and the pleasure with which they took part. Their Father Vicar Provincial, who happened to be there, was the one who urged them on with his darts, his wonderful voice, and his spirit. They were reading from the printed paper (those from Alcalá were still available then) not just this Father but also another one who is very learned, and a servant of God, the Regent of their studies at [the college of] Santo Tomás of Manila. They did the Act of Contrition in an apostolic manner. Jesus Christ always carries the day. Not even the Commander of that fort was absent. It was done on three days; at night within the walls, and on other occasion among the Indians outside the walls. Everyone was left very fond of this holy exercise, and it was decided that it should be done one night each week during Lent. If it cannot be done at that time, on account of the heavy rains that hardly leave the streets passable, or near Lent, it can be done during the rest of the year. What makes it so sweet from God, is that the whole thing originated from a false premise; indeed, at the time Pumpuan the Chinese was already dead, and *per modum meriti in spe* [he had died in a manner worthy of his crime] (I forget the exact wording of the expression). The good Lord was thus placated and such prayers detained the son [of Pumpuan] so that

he would not pursue the intentions of his father. Instead, he sent a peace ambassador. Our Lord has it in hand.

All the Fathers here have taken to the Act of Contrition with great fervor. The Father Provincial, Ignacio Zapata,¹ requested it insistently. The Rector [of the College of Manila], Fr. Rafael de Bonafé, arranged it all immediately, and sang his sentences and carried the small bell, while the other Rector of Cavite, Fr. Luis Espineli, did the same with much spirit. Father Nicolas Cani, an apostolic man, was dying of holy envy that the plan had not come from him. Father Xavier Riquelme, from our Province of Toledo² stood out, and Father Francisco Combés in all the sermons that he gave during Lent always ended them with a very fervent Act of Contrition. The examples set by the Masters of Alcalá, and Salamanca, have helped in all of this. Thank God that, since they cannot come here or be in as many places as their love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of souls to be redeemed, would take them, many others do it in their place by following their examples in parts that they cannot reach themselves. Please Y.R. tell our Master, Father Rivadeneira, that Saint Barbara, and Saint Inés do very well overhere, and I hope that they take care overthere to help us to fulfill our agreement, and vow. Regarding what I said about Saint Inés, the devotion that Father Rivadeneira instilled in me, has made me take a close look at a mission station dedicated to her in these mountains here, where there are many Indian heathens, fleeing at the sight of Spaniards, and I am getting ready to go out one of these days to hunt for them, whenever they order me to do it, and I have been told that it might be soon.³ and I am going with a great hope in the intervention of the holy Shepherdess, who was bringing these sheep to the fold of the Good Shepherd, etc. There remains for me to go there with prayers, and examples, counsels, and letters written about such missions, and the Act of Contrition, and the pious works of St. Ignatius and St. Xavier, who, as I have said, help even those in the most faraway places. The practice here is centered upon the indoctrination [with catechism] of these poor Indians; some of it applies to Spaniards as well, and what is done with them is very important, so that they will not undo what we do in the indoctrination of the Indians with their [bad] examples.

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- 1 Ed. note: He served as Provincial twice: 1661-63 and 1665-66. Fr. Rafael de Bonafé served in-between those dates, and was in charge when Fr. Sanvitores was sent to Mindoro.
 - 2 Ed. note: The former Jesuit Province of Toledo, run from Alcalá de Henares (not the modern Toledo), corresponded roughly to the province of Castilla la Nueva.
 - 3 Ed. note: Fr. Murillo Velarde, in his book "Historia de Filipinas" (Manila, 1749) says the following: "A mission was conducted in the mountains of Santa Inez of Lanating, a visita of Antipolo. One of the missionaries was the same Father Diego Luis de San Vitores, and in seven days he gathered a very abundant harvest; for in that short time 24,000 heathens, Aetas or Cimarrons [i.e. runaways], were baptized, and many others were prepared for the rite, who received baptisms afterward." The author goes on to describe several of these conversions; he also cites various entries of special interest from "the books of the old mission of Santa Ines, which I have before me." Many of these baptisms were made by Fr. San Vitores, but "this mission was cared for by a devout Indian named Don Juan Estevan, who afterward was a donado [i.e. oblate], and in the absence of the minister instructed and baptized them—as did the Canacopoles [i.e. catechists], whom St. Xavier chose in India." (B&R 44: 101-102).

Thus, our Fathers, who are among the most zealous, work splendidly hand in hand, and with their help we will march with our Acts of Contrition, and the missions that God will arrange until His Majesty is pleased to arrange otherwise. Right now, I am kept at rest and out of dangers, such as can be found in the missions of the Visayas, and besides the Father my [former] companion who, as I said, was captured, they have robbed many of our Fathers these days, burning their churches, and one of them is Father Francisco Fernandez (who is called Francisco Manuel here), one of Father Rivadeneira's Arts student, and always an angel. The letter he wrote is quite moving; they have destroyed his town, and church, and attacked the holy crucifix, breaking it, and offending it. This was done by the Moros, who are the only enemies we have here (besides the Chinaman who wanted to make war, but God killed him, striking him with rage, and he died biting his own hands, so that his intentions were frustrated). God actually took pity on him, by sending him to Hell before he earned even more punishment, though it be not small. This Chinaman was not the Emperor of China, who is a Tartar. This other man was the son of one of those pirates that Father Martin Martinez wrote about in his book: *Bello Tartarico* [The Tartar War], the one who captured the Island of Formosa from the Dutch, and with other islands, and other Chinese who joined him, grabbed power and gained the arrogance which he displayed in the letter he wrote to Manila requesting tribute and threatening, as will be seen overthere in the letters that went out of these Islands last year. Finally, God has confused the arrogant ones. The consolation that comes out of these wars in these Islands is that the people here all are against the enemies of God, and the risks that are run are for the conservation of this Christian community.

[Description of the Philippines]

Regarding the characteristics of these Islands much has been said in history books. What I can say, based on my experience so far is that the food, and material succors are enough to remain healthy and strong in the divine service; even my teeth find the bread of this land easy to chew, because it is rice cooked as *Morisqueta* (so called), that is cooked with only water, until it becomes like a thick "arroz con leche" [rice pudding]. Wine from grapes is preserved for masses, but it is not missed by those who drink the local wine, derived from coconut palms, and it is missed even less by those who drink only water, in which case it is no hardship. The *Baboy*, or local pigs, and the cows that have been brought by the Spanish, take the place of sheep quite well. The climate is not so hot as I had imagined; in fact, I am of the opinion that the warmest temperature here does not reach the ordinary temperature of the summer in Seville, nor that of the dog days in Madrid. The usual temperature is like a temperate summer day in Spain, although one sweats more on account of the humidity. Sometimes it is cold, but not much. All the new arrivals suffer from the "local test", and so, all my companions suffered from this test.¹ As for me, they called me "the tough one". We must give

1 Ed. note: He refers to diarrhea.

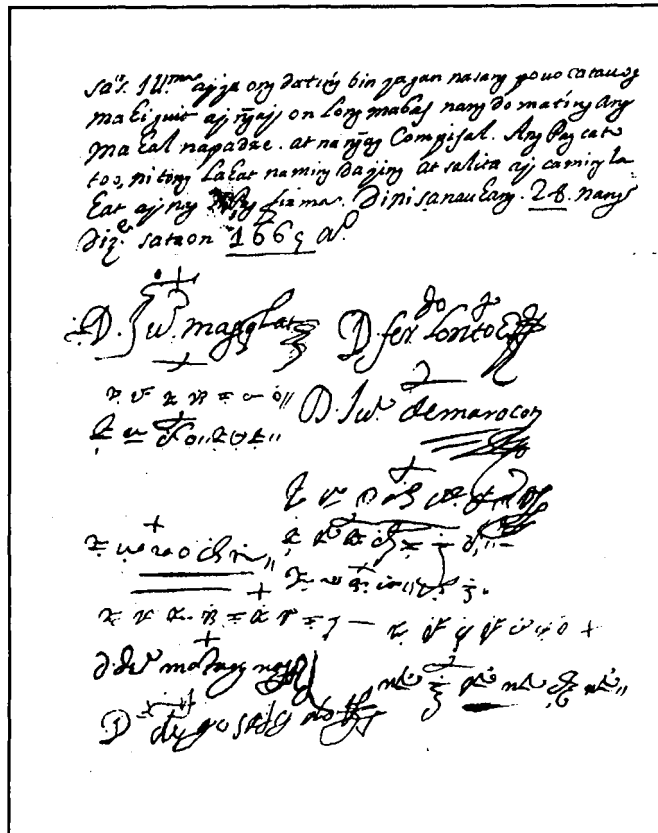
thanks to God, because, since that illness of April 1659 in Madrid, I have not known what is a headache, not even felt motion sickness, either at sea or on land, during such a long voyage, unless there are more tests in the offing. However, regarding the weather, and the [material] comforts, I have nothing to say except that much praise has been wasted on this subject; anyone who would come here for this reason would soon find that he has been had, and anyone who did not expect anything would be pleasantly surprised, and would find only consolation in doing God's will by means of holy obedience, and in helping in some way to preserve this Christian community, and the body of the Religious order that does so many good things for these souls, in the ministries assigned to him, even if it be that of Minister¹ (like Father Francisco Salgado, an individual with great talents, who came with us from the Province of Castile and is now a Minister, though only by interim) or a Master of Grammar, a post that also exists in Manila, but there are [posts of] Minister and Masters only in Manila, and they too, while learning the language, have contact with Indians. Swords and martyrdoms await us later on, and we need not worry about those until the Lord decides, and we should beg Him to postpone it until many souls have been despatched to Heaven, so that His glory be increased thus, which is the single crown worthy of all desire.²

Regarding the natives of this country, they say that they apply themselves very well to the things of our holy Faith, and Christian customs. When it comes to teaching them, experience with ordinary people in the small towns of Spain would be an advantage, and in matters concerning will and devotion, it would be better also if they were attended continuously by the Fathers, as the Tagalog people I have had contact with in these mission stations. It is worthy of giving a thousand thanks to God, to see that what was not even 100 years ago an uncultivated jungle of heathenism and a field of harvest for the Devil has become a paradise with so many plants and harvests worthy of God's glory every day. Finally, so many souls that would have ended up in Hell are being saved on account of the piety of our Catholic Kings, who at the cost of much application, etc., have sent so many Gospel ministers to these lands. Similarly, more of them should come, in order to attend better these souls that are as precious in the eyes of God as those born in Spain, and in order to extend the endeavor to other numberless souls that are being lost in the neighboring countries of gentiles and Moros, also redeemed by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, there is also [need of] the succor of workers in demand in Great China and the Island of Formosa; the demand cannot be met now, as there are not enough to send there, for lack of workers here, and for Japan too. There are still hopes for Japan; at least, they say that the Christians who are natives of Japan, who had been exiled, can return, although nothing is for certain, as contact and trade with Catholic foreigners is very small. However, in the end God will no doubt let the anxious prayers of St. Francis Xavier convince Him, more so than our

1 Ed. note: The post of house minister was an administrative job.

2 Ed. note: His mention of swords seems to be prophetic; he was to suffer his martyrdom partly by the sword.

sins that must block this initiative. Firstly, let us hope that our sins will cease, and let us take as a lesson the sins of the man who came with this last mission band whom we had to expulse, etc.



Old Tagalog script, 1665. At the time of Fr. Sanvitores, many literate Filipinos had not yet learned how to use the Spanish alphabet. This sample is taken from Jesuit papers in RAH. It represents a request made to a bishop for confirmation, the undersigned having already received baptisms, and gone to confession, etc.

[Prayers in Tagalog]

Because it will be a consolation to the devotees of the Act of Contrition, I enclose this copy in the form that was made in the Tagalog language¹ and that concerning the exhortation is a literal translation of that of the Venerable Father Gerónimo Lopez and many of the sentences as well. Others are specific to the particularities of the Indians. All of them, however, are set in regular verses, as these Tagalogs also use poetry; although some of the rhymes coincide with those of the Spanish verses, nevertheless, they carry the special pronunciation of this native tongue. They are written with Spanish letters, since the Tagalogs themselves now use them, because to read texts using their own alphabet is a rough business, even for them, because it is like the Hebrew alphabet, with one symbol representing various readings, even after they have added the [diacritical] points which they also use. The language is truly difficult, without parallel with any of the European languages, but the languages used overhere are very similar among them-

¹ Ed. note: No longer found with this letter in the ARSI file.

selves. It looks somewhat like Hebrew, but what can I say, with my little fluency, I can only do ordinary ministries, and talk only enough for the basic tasks for the salvation of these poor peoples. Anyone can achieve this state with the grace of God and the Act of Contrition. This is not wishful thinking; if God can call one, He can also remove the obstacles that one can meet in learning new languages, but it is true that if God calls, He will know how to remove even greater obstacles.

Besides this language, there is yet another one in our mission stations. They call it Visayan, and it turns out that it is this Tagalog, minus its troublesomeness.¹ In fact, those who could not master Tagalog have turned to Visayan. In short, if someone comes with God's calling, that is with the single desire to do His holiest will, made manifest through holy obedience, once the Superior is informed of one's interior impulses and inspirations concerning all the difficulties, he will come out alright, and with something gained. Indeed, God's will is very sweet and very effective. True it is that something positive will come out in the end, as He can only convert all the bad things into something better. However, one must keep firmly in mind that not all the desires regarding the Indies are granted by God to be fulfilled in the Indies, but that many are granted by turning the ministries in Europe into Indian ones, as the saintly Father Carrafa, our General,² said and did: it is a pity that one who desires these Indies that he does not have, botches those [missions] that he does have at hand, in which he could succeed with so much fruit, [travelling] missions, Acts of Contrition, and other ministries of the Society. Indeed, there are truly more opportunities in Europe for going on missions from town to town. One can make use of this type of opportunities, given the required amount of determination and zeal for souls, if he wants to, because others have done it. On the other hand, such missions are not always possible here, on account of the greater lack of priests, although perhaps with the Act of Contrition, which is the means and objective to everything, might make missions easier here also, even outside of the

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- 1 Ed. note: He seems to think that the two levels of formal Tagalog (polite versus common expressions) were a bother to differentiate and master. However, this was good training for him, and no doubt helped him to learn the related Mariano, or Chamorro, language quickly later on.
 - 2 Ed. note: Vincenzo Carrafa was Jesuit General from 1646 to 1649.

towns assigned to us as mission stations; already, with the willing cooperation of [other] Religious orders, they are been carried out in towns belonging to their mission stations, for instance, those of the Franciscan and Recollect Fathers, etc. Finally, the will of God, who wants some overhere and some overthere, and who is the owner of the whole vineyard, is the one who must determine which missions are assigned to which holy Religious order. Blessed be His will, for letting us know with certainty. God grant that we carry it out in full.¹

I refer you also to the letters of our St. Xavier, that are better writing. The galleon that is to bring our companions has not arrived yet. May the Lord bring them in good condition, and may He keep Y.R. burning with His love, which should be burning in all of us.

Taytay, near Manila, 22 July 1663.

Y.R.'s servant,

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+ Diego Luis de Sanvitores +

[Endorsement:] Letters from the Philippines, 1663.—Copy of a letter of Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores. He refers to his arrival at the Philippines and that of his travelling companions.

1 Ed. note: The Nagasaki copy has one additional paragraph here, as follows: "I am also sending those papers that have been printed here for the regular use of this divine exercise of contrition. By looking at those printed in Spanish, one will understand what is contained in those printed in the Tagalog language, which is essentially the same material. The small ones with a postscript are prayers to the Blessed Virgin, to St. Ignatius, and St. [Francis] Xavier. The prayer to the Blessed Virgin is the same text as the ending of the Act of Contrition by Father Gerónimo Lopez [which in Latin is]: *Virgen Santissima pedid que me quite la vida*, etc. which has been applied also to be said every Sunday in the church with the short version of the Act of Contrition. The prayers to St. Ignatius and St. Xavier are the same as the official ones [which in Latin are]: *Deus, qui ad maiorem* and *Deus, qui glorificastis*. Goodbye, I refer you to the other letter that goes with this one for specific news, etc. and requests, and also to the letters of our St. Xavier..."

Ed. comment: There is some confusion here, because the second official prayer, that to St. Francis Xavier, is not the one he quotes; it should begin with the Latin phrase: "Deus, qui Indiarum gentes..."