

LETTER OF DOMINGO DE SALAZAR, O.P., FIRST BISHOP
OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO PHILIP II

Manila, June 12, 1582

INTRODUCTION

In this letter Salazar tells the king among other things, that he had written him from Mexico City notifying him of his arrival in New Spain. Salazar informed the king of the death during the crossing from Spain to Veracruz of 18 of the 20 Dominicans he was taking with him to the Philippines. They were supposed to be the ones to start the Dominican apostolate in the Philippines and the Far East. In view of this tragedy, Salazar set things in motion in Mexico City to get other Dominicans. Unable to find them, he sent Father Juan Crisóstomo to Spain and Rome with letters of recommendation to petition the king and the pope for the necessary permits to start in earnest the new Dominican province.

From the letter we see that Salazar, after a stay in Mexico of almost six months, sailed from Acapulco to Manila on March 29. They sighted the island of Luzon on the first of July. It was well into the season of the *vendabales* or typhoons. After taking shelter in Ibalon (Sorsogon) he decided to travel overland from Sorsogon to Manila. He entered the city on September 17, 1581. Along the way he received delegations of natives who com-

plained against the abuses of the *encomenderos*. They flocked to him seeking redress and defense from the vexations and exact-ions of the Spanish officials.

By June of 1582, the date of the present letter, Salazar had acquired a good picture of the situation of the Philippines. His impression was very negative. We see him divided and apprehensive and even fearful of reporting this to the king. He knew that he had to pass judgment on the actions of the civil authorities and this pained him. To keep silent would be a betrayal of his duties. To speak might be interpreted as negative criticism and lack of charity. Finally he decided to report to the king and the Council of Indies. He was encouraged to do this by the timely arrival of a royal *cedula* in which he and all the bishops of the Spanish overseas dominions were asked by the king to report about the situation of the different colonies. The result is the letter we are presenting now and others of the year 1582.

CARTA DE FRAY DOMINGO DE SALAZAR A FELIPE II
AVISANDO DE SU VIAJE DESDE ACAPULCO Y LA
POBREZA DE LA IGLESIA

Manila, 12 de Junio, 1582

Católica Real Majestad

Aquél por quien los reyes reinan, dé a vuestra majestad su gracia e hincha de su espíritu con que dignamente pueda gobernar tantos y tan grandes reinos como por su divina ordenación, en tiempo de vuestra majestad, ha puesto debajo de la corona real de Castilla. Amen.

De México escribí haciendo saber a vuestra majestad de mi llegada y cómo quedaba en aquella ciudad aguardando oportunidad para proseguir mi viaje a estas islas.

Partimos de Acapulco, puerto de la Nueva España, a veinte y nueve de Marzo de mil y quinientos y ochenta y uno. Llegamos a principio de Julio a reconocer esta isla y tomamos tierra en un puerto de ella, que se llama Ibalon, que estará como noventa leguas de esta ciudad, de donde estuvimos diez y ocho a veinte días aguardando tiempo para salir de aquél puerto, y como los vendabales iban cargando, determiné de venirme por tierra, que venir por mar era imposible, por ser el vendabal que corría contrario a nuestra navegación.

Entré en esta ciudad de Manila a diez y siete de Septiembre, donde fuí de todos bien recibido; y por virtud de las bulas apostólicas, provisiones y cédulas de vuestra majestad me dieron la obediencia como a su perlado y obispo. Hallé esta iglesia tan

LETTER OF DOMINGO DE SALAZAR, O.P., FIRST BISHOP
OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO PHILIP II

Manila, June 12, 1582

Catholic Royal Majesty

May the One from whom kings reign give to your Majesty His grace and fullness of His spirit to let Your Majesty govern with dignity the many and great kingdoms that, through His divine will, He has placed under the royal Crown of Castille in the very time of your Majesty. Amen.

I wrote from Mexico¹ letting your Majesty know about my arrival, and how I was waiting in that city for the opportunity to continue my trip to these islands.

We left Acapulco,² a port of New Spain, on March 29, of the year five hundred and eighty one. We sighted this island at the beginning of July. We landed in a port of this island called Ibalon,³ around ninety leagues from this city. We waited in that harbour for eighteen or twenty days. Since the *vendabales*⁴ were gaining force I decided to come by land since it was impossible to come by sea as the vendabal was against our sailing.⁵

On September seventeen I entered this city where I was welcomed by all. They gave me their obedience as their prelate and bishop in virtue of the apostolic bulls, provisions and cédulas of your Majesty.⁶ I found this church so poor and abused that it

pobre y maltratada, que parecía bien haberse desde su niñez criado sin padre, y sin que hubiese habido quien de ella se acordase ni tuviese cuidado alguno, cercada de paja, sin sacristía, ni haber dónde poder tener el santísimo sacramento, ni para guardar en ella un frontal, sin ornamento ni otro recaudo alguno para servicio del altar; y sino fuera por el recaudo que yo traje de México, que lo compré con la merced que de la hacienda de vuestra majestad se me hizo, y con mucho más que yo me empené, no hubiéramos tenido con que decir una misa, ni después acá se ha podido hacer, como vuestra majestad sabrá por la relación que va con ésta.

Bien veo y conozco la obligación que tengo de dar a vuestra majestad cuenta y razón de lo que en estas tierras pasa como a mi rey y señor, y de hacer fiel y verdadera relación del estado en que están las cosas de estos reinos, pero háme tenido muy confuso y sin poder casi determinarme si escribiría a vuestra majestad acerca de este punto o callaría. Convidame a callar ver que la relación de las cosas que acá pasan se puede muy malamente hacer sin tocar en tercera persona, que es cosa peligrosísima, y más siendo la relación para vuestra majestad, a quien se han de referir las cosas con mucho tiento, pero con toda verdad.

Poníase me también por delante al peligro que me pongo de ser tenido por apasionado, a que me alargara más de lo que debo, y también que siendo la relación de tan lejos llegan allá las cosas muy cansadas. Y aunque a los que acá las vemos y pasamos nos hacen mucha impresión y nos dan mucha pena, como cosas que están presentes, pero oídas allá no se tienen en tanto, por ser muy diferente la impresión que hacen las cosas en los que de presente las ven, o las oyen ausentes, en especial que nunca se puede hacer relación de una cosa tan al vivo que no se queden muchas menuencias y particularidades, que vistas y pasadas acá, hacen la cosa muy grave; y faltando en la relación hacen que pierda la fuerza para que no se le dé el crédito necesario.

Júntase a ésto saber que los que acá son causa de que las cosas no vayan tan bien ordenadas como debían, ternán sus mañas y sabrán buscar modos para que allá no se entienda lo que acá pasa, o para que si alguno, con buen celo, avisare de ello no se le dé el crédito que es necesario, para que de allá venga el remedio.

seemed to me it had grown without a father since childhood, without anybody having taken any care of it. It was roofed with straw, with no sacristy, no place in which to place the Most Blessed Sacrament, no place to put up a frontal, no ornament or any other set for the service of the altar. We would have not had anything to celebrate the mass with had it not been for the set I brought from Mexico, which I bought with the donation given me by the exchequer of your Majesty and with more money I borrowed. I have not been able to get anything here, as your Majesty may come to know from the report attached to this letter.⁷

I see and understand very well the obligation I have to give your Majesty, as my king and lord, an account and explanation of what is happening in these lands and to prepare a faithful and true relation of the state of things in these kingdoms. I have found myself perplexed and undecided whether I would write your Majesty about this or I would keep silent. What induces me to keep quiet is the realization that the relation of the things happening here cannot be made in any way without touching on third persons, something very dangerous, more so since the relation is for your Majesty, to whom things must be presented with tact but also in truth.

I also realize the danger of being accused of bias, or of being lengthier than what is proper. Since the relation is sent from so far away, the things arrive there very diluted. Although these things impress people here more and sadden as more — for they are always before our eyes — once they are heard there, they are not considered so important, for the impression things make upon people who hear them from afar is distinct from the one caused on people who see them happening in their very presence. We can never make a relation so alive but that many peculiarities and details will be left out which make things here look very grave and, if lacking in the relation, make it less creditable.

Together with this, we know that the ones responsible for not letting things occur as they should will have recourse to their own cunning and will look for means not to let be known there what is happening here, or if anybody with good zeal should inform of anything, no due credit be given him, so that no solution may come from there.

Y lo que más nos angustia es ver que vuestra majestad está cinco mil leguas de aquí y que cuando vayan allá las quejas de los agravios que acá se escriben, aunque se dé credito a todo, y se mande luego remediar, ha de ser tarde, que cuando acá llegue el remedio sería posible no hallar ya aquél remedio. Y esta consideración tiene a muchos tan acobardados y desmayados que quieren más callar y pasar por sus agravios que buscan [sic] el remedio de ellos a tanta costa y riesgo; y que por buena maña que se den en pedirlo, se ha de pasar mucho tiempo antes de alcanzarla.

Por otra parte, la obligación arriba dicha y escrúpulo y remordimiento de conciencia me remordía o compelia a no callar, sino que diese muy larga cuenta del estado en que hallé estas tierras, y el que ahora quedan, porque no es posible que un rey tan cristianísimo como vuestra majestad deje de poner remedio en cosas tan dañosas a esta república, y que tan a costa de la real conciencia se disimularía con ellas.

Y lo que más me apretaba a que no lo dejase de hacer era y es la obligación que yo tengo a cumplir con lo que debo a Dios como cristiano, y a vuestra majestad como su vasallo, y a esta república como padre y pastor de ella; y que yo más que otro alguno estoy necesitado mirar por ella, a buscarle y mirarle todo el bien que pudiese y apartar y estorbar cuanto en mi fuere todo el mal y daño que le podía venir, la cual, después de Dios, por ninguna otra vía se puede alcanzar si no es haciendo saber a vuestra majestad, a cuyo cargo Dios y su Iglesia tienen puesto lo que a estas tierras conviene, y que aunque más lejos vuestra majestad esté, en fin se pasa el tiempo y viene el remedio; y con la esperanza de él se pasan los trabajos con menos pesadumbres.

Y lo que más ánimo me da es que aunque todo faltase, a lo menos no faltará el haber yo hecho lo que debo y que con Dios siquiera tendré esta excusa de no haber dejado de intentar y pro-

What saddens us more is the fact that your Majesty is five thousand leagues away from here, and once the complaints of grievances we write about reach there, and due credit is given to all, and an order is issued to remedy them, it will be very late [in arriving] for when the solution arrives here it might be possible that the remedy is not feasible any more.

The thought of this makes many people feel so cowed and faint-hearted that they prefer more to be silent and tolerate the abuses than to look for a solution to them, at so great a cost and danger. Even if they manage to ask for a solution, a long time will pass before getting it.

On the other hand, the obligation above mentioned, and the scruples and remorse of conscience pricked or compelled me not to be silent, but rather forced me to give a very long account of the state in which I found these lands and the state they are now, because it is not possible that so Christian a king as your Majesty is, would not give a solution to the things that are so injurious to this commonwealth. To simulate them would be to the account of your Majesty's conscience.

What pressed me more to have this report written was and is the obligation I have to fulfill what I owe to God as a Christian, to your Majesty as a vassal, and to this commonwealth as a father and a pastor. I more than anybody else am obliged to look after this obligation, to see and find the good that may come and avoid and hinder, in so far as this is possible in me, the evil and harm that may accrue to it, a solution to which cannot be obtained except first from God and then by letting your Majesty know it, to whose care God and His Church has placed everything pertaining to these lands. And although your Majesty is far, the time passes and the solution arrives. With this hope of a solution we pass through our trials with less bitterness.

What gives me greater strength is to know that although everything may be lacking, at least what will not be lacking is to have done, from my part, what is my duty to God. I will have the excuse of having tried and procured all that was necessary for

curar todo lo que para el bien de mis ovejas era necesario, pues en mi mano ni era ni es más que llorar los males que veo acá y suplicar a Dios por el remedio, y procurarlo con vuestra majestad.

Estando en esta duda y perplejidad llegó el navío en que vino una cédula de vuestra majestad, con que acabé de determinarme a no callar, porque en ella se nos manda a mí y a nuestros sucesores que, no cumpliendo los gobernadores de estas islas lo que por vuestra majestad les está ordenado y mandado, demos aviso de ello y de todo lo demás que nos pareciere para que, sabido allá, vuestra majestad provea lo que más convenga. Esta cédula se notificó a Don Gonzalo Ronquillo, gobernador de estas islas, y queda original en el archivo de esta iglesia, para que por ella conste a los obispos, nuestros sucesores, cuán santo es el celo de vuestra majestad, y como quiere y manda que todo lo que es para bien de estas tierras y naturales de ellas se cumpla y guarde, como vuestra majestad lo tiene mandado; y cuando los gobernadores así no lo hicieren, sepan los obispos la obligación que tienen de avisar fiel y verdaderamente a vuestra majestad sin tener respeto a más que decir verdad; y sepan también la merced que vuestra majestad nos hace en ser servido mandar demos éste aviso, pues se entiende que lo manda por el crédito que vuestra majestad tiene de nosotros, y así lo dará a la relación que le hiciésemos. Yo de mi parte y por todos mis sucesores beso a vuestra majestad sus reales manos por tan gran merced.

Y porque la relación de tantas y tan varias cosas como han sucedido y es necesario darles remedio no puede dejar de ser algo mas larga de lo que la brevedad de carta sufre, háme parecido no alargar más ésta, sino poner aparte, en un memorial, todo lo que es necesario saber para que vuestra majestad sea bien informado y vea lo que, para el remedio de estas tierras, es necesario proveer.

A vuestra majestad humildemente suplico reciba mi voluntad y celo con que lo escribo, con seguridad que no me mueve sino solo el servicio de Dios y de vuestra majestad y dolerme de las miserias y trabajos en que veo a los que por acá están. Y si fuere algo

the welfare of my sheep, for there was nothing else in my power but to bewail the evils I see here, and pray to God for the solution and try to procure it from your Majesty.

Finding myself in this doubt and perplexity the ship [from Acapulco] arrived with a *cédula* of your Majesty. I decided not to be silent anymore, for in it we and your successors are directed to inform of everything we think convenient, if the governors of these islands do not fulfill what is ordained and commanded them by your Majesty, so that it be known there, and your Majesty may provide what would be most fitting. This cedula was presented to Don Gonzalo Ronquillo, the Governor of these islands. The original is in the archives of this church, so that through it the bishops, our successors, will come to know how holy is your Majesty's zeal, and how your Majesty wills and commands that everything which is for the good of these lands and natives be fulfilled and obeyed, as it is decreed by your Majesty. When the governors might not fulfill it, let the bishops know the obligation they have to inform your Majesty faithfully and truthfully, with no other respect but for the truth. Let them also know the favour rendered to us by your Majesty in allowing us to send the information, as it is understood that your Majesty so orders because of the good credit your Majesty gives to us, and thus the same credit will be given to our reports. I for my part kiss your Majesty's royal hands for so great a favour.

Since the report of so many and varied things as have happened and are in need of a solution does not permit us to be longer than the brevity of a letter will allow, it seemed to me well not to extend this one any more, but rather to put separately, in a memorial,⁸ everything that is necessary to know, so that your Majesty may be well informed and may decide what is most necessary to offer as a remedy to these lands.

I beg your Majesty to please accept the will and zeal that moves me in writing this, assuring your Majesty that nothing urges me but God's service and your Majesty's, and to lament the miseries and sufferings afflicting those who are here. If it be

más larga de lo que las muchas ocupaciones de vuestra majestad piden, también suplico a vuestra majestad me perdone, pues relación hecha de cinco mil leguas, y de cosas que acá parecen dignas de remedio, no puede ser breve sin hacer mucha falta a lo que se debía decir.

Nuestro Señor la Católica Real persona de vuestra majestad guarde muchos años, para amparo y defensa de sus santa Iglesia y aumento de su santa fe católica.

De Manila, y de Junio a XII de 1582 años.

Católica Real Majestad, besa las manos reales de vuestra majestad su menor siervo y capellán.

[Fdo.] Fr. Domingo
Obispo de Filipinas

Archivo General de Indias (AGI)
Filipinas 74

lengthier than what your Majesty's occupations allow, I also beg forgiveness from your Majesty, for a report made from five thousand leagues away, of things that need to be remedied, cannot be brief without failing in what needs to be said.

May Our Lord keep the Catholic and royal person of your Majesty for many years, for the protection and defense of his Holy Church and increase of his Catholic faith.

From Manila, June 12, 1582.

Catholic Royal Majesty. Your Majesty's humble servant and chaplain kisses the royal hands of your Majesty.

[Signed] Fr. Domingo
Bishop of the Philippines

FOOTNOTES

¹ Whenever we find the word Mexico in the letters of the missionaries and administrators of this period they refer to Mexico City. Mexico, the nation, was called New Spain. In our translations we shall adopt their method for the sake of clarity.

² The Viceroy of New Spain, the Count of Coruña, saw to it that everything was ready for the trip from Acapulco to Manila. He ordered Don Juan de Guzmán, alcalde mayor of Acapulco, an expert in maritime affairs, to dispatch the galleon to Manila with provisions for a safe crossing.

³ Ibalon is today's Sorsogon, the capital of the province of Sorsogon, in the Bicol region.

⁴ The early Spaniards distinguished two main seasons in the Philippines: the season of the *vendabales* and the season of the *brisas*. Their point of reference was the winds.

The season of the *vendabales* is the season of the typhoons, called *bagyos* in the Philippines. They are terrible and powerful winds, of gale force, that usually start west of the Marianas and move in increasing force in a west north-west direction. The Philippines are right in the path of the typhoons. The season starts with the rains in May-June and ends around November-December. The rains as such are brought by the south-east monsoon.

The season of the *brisas* starts in November-December and lasts up to April-May. The winds are brought about by the north-east monsoon. They are the "westerlies" of the English-speaking people, blowing strongly and steadily from east to west. These *brisas* or westerlies pushed the galleons from Acapulco to Manila across the vast expanse of the South Seas.

For the duration of the crossing from Acapulco to Manila and from Manila to Acapulco and the difficulties entailed in the crossing, see W. L. SCHURZ, *The Manila Galleon*, New York, 1959, 251-283; Cfr. Sande's *Relation of the Filipinas Islands* in E. H. BLAIR & J. A. ROBERTSON, *The Philippine Islands, 1492-1898*, 55 vols., Cleveland, 1905-1909, Vol. IV; 21-23.

⁵ Salazar received during his stay in Ibalon a delegation of Filipino *datus* of the Bicol region complaining against the manner of collecting tribute and the abuses of some Spanish encomenderos. In his long *Report* of 1582 we read: "When I was in the port of Ibalon some chiefs came to see me; and the first thing they said to me was, that one who was collecting the tributes in that settlement had killed a chief by torture, and the same Indians indicated the manner in which he had been killed, which was by crucifixion, and hanging him by the arms. I saw this soldier in the town of Caceres, in the province of Camarines, and learned that the justice had arrested him for it and fined him fifty pesos -to be divided equally between the exchequer and the expenses of justice- and that with this punishment he was immediately set free." in BRPI, V, 223-224.

⁶ Cfr. *Letter of Don Gonzalo Ronquillo to Philip II*, Manila, June 15, 1582, in BRPI, IV, 316.

⁷ Here is a clear reference to Salazar's *Report* of this very year 1582.

⁸ When the letter was received and read in the Council of Indies the relator wrote on the margin: 'Please, look for the report and let it be brought'.

PETITION OF SOME FILIPINO CHIEFTAINS OF TONDO
AND SURROUNDING TOWNS ADDRESSED TO DOMINGO
DE SALAZAR, FIRST BISHOP OF THE PHILIPPINES

Manila, June 15, 1582

INTRODUCTION

Some of the chieftains —*principales*— of Tondo and surrounding areas, knowing that Salazar was reporting to the king of Spain, begged him to inform the king in their behalf. They had come to know that if the king were to be told of their toils and labors, he would take action immediately.

Salazar, in view of their petition, asked them to be a little more specific in their complaints. He thought that, in order to inform the king, they had to mention more in concrete some of the abuses to which they were subjected.

In answer to this, the *principales* pointed to the fact of the existence of too many provincial governors —*alcaldes mayores*—. While some years before there were just a few, at the moment there were too many. They were punished by the *alcaldes mayores* for small offences; sometimes even for trivial causes.

One of the exploitations to which they were submitted by the *alcaldes* was to take away from them the rice they harvested and, after hoarding it for some time, resell it to them again at exorbitant prices. The *alcaldes* tried to control all provisions and took

the right to trade and deal in the open market away from the natives.

Perhaps what they resented most was the fact of getting some natives to row in the galleys and frigates. They were paid very little; sometimes even nothing. No sooner had they returned from an expedition that they were asked to get ready for the next one.

In view of this, many of the natives left their districts near Manila and went to other provinces. The *alcaldes* forced the *principales* to come up with the tributes or taxes even for those who had already left. If the *principales* were unable to meet these demands, not rarely they were put in the stocks. They asked Salazar to petition the king to allow them to go to private encomiendas, for they could no longer live in the encomiendas of the crown. Even some of them asked to be given permission to leave the island of Luzon and go to some other island in the Philippines.

In Salazar's *Report* of 1582, already mentioned, we come across this problem referred here by the *principales* of Tondo and neighbouring districts. We see from the *Report* that the encomenderos often times took pity on the natives and forgave them the payment due as tribute. They did this in view of the extreme poverty of the natives. The encomenderos lived in their encomiendas and, as Salazar said, they knew the poverty of the natives and did not demand the tribute to the full, or simply dispensed them. Thus many encomenderos were very poor and, often-times, went hungry themselves.

In the encomiendas under the crown the royal officials and *alcaldes mayores* sent collectors to get the tribute without any consideration for the poverty of the natives. Salazar's *Report* and this petition of the Filipino chieftains are a proof that the natives preferred to live in private encomiendas rather than in the encomiendas under the crown.

The historical and social background for this petition is the new situation created after the arrival of Don Gonzalo Ronquillo as Governor of the Philippines. The economic dislocations caused during his rule were serious and affected the whole social fabric

of Philippine society. Furthermore, the political situation was still insecure. If the Spaniards were to stay, as they indeed wished to, they had to embark on some military expeditions to pacify the islands. They were surrounded by enemies from within and from without. The Chinese always seemed a serious threat to them. The Japanese *wako* pirates, entrenched in Cagayan, could strike a mortal blow to the Spaniards. The regions far from Manila and Luzon were hardly touched by the Spaniards. The need for military expeditions, the so-called pacification campaigns, were of vital importance once this presupposition of the Spaniards' will to stay is taken into consideration.

TESTIMONIO DE LO QUE CIERTOS INDIOS PRINCIPALES
DE TONDO Y OTROS PUEBLOS PIDIERON AL OBISPO
DOMINGO DE SALAZAR

Manila, 15 de Junio, 1582

En la ciudad de Manila, quince días del mes de Junio de mil y quinientos y ochenta y dos años.

Ante el muy ilustrísimo y reverendísimo señor, Don Fray Domingo de Salazar, primer obispo de estas islas y del consejo de su majestad, y en presencia de mi, el secretario yuso escrito, parecieron ciertos indios que mediante Francisco Morante y Andrés de Cervantes, intérpretes de la lengua mora, dijeron llamarse Don Luis Amanicalao, y Don Martin Panga, y Don Gabriel Tuanbazar y Don Juan Bantangad, cristianos; y Salalila y Calao Amarlenguayguay, infieles, y Doña Francisca Saygan, principales de los pueblos de Tondo, Capaymisilo, con otros muchos número de principales.

Y mediante los dichos intérpretes dijeron que ellos han sabido cómo en esta nao, que está de partida para la Nueva España, su señoría reverendísima ha de escribir a su majestad. Y porque ellos pasan tantos agravios, molestias y vejaciones, como a todos consta y es notorio, que le suplicaban muy humilmente sea servido de dar noticia de ello muy particular a su majestad, porque tienen entendido que, sabidos por su majestad los trabajos que ellos pasan, será servido de remediarlos.

Y preguntados en particular qué cosas son las que quieren que se dé noticia a su majestad, que las digan y declaren, dijeron que

PETITION OF SOME FILIPINO CHIEFTAINS OF TONDO
AND SURROUNDING TOWNS ADDRESSED TO DOMINGO
DE SALAZAR, FIRST BISHOP OF THE PHILIPPINES

Manila, June 15, 1582

In the city of Manila, the fifteenth day of the month of June, of the year one thousand five hundred and eighty two.

Before the Very Reverend Illustrious Lord, Don Fay Domingo de Salazar, first Bishop of these Islands, and of his Majesty's Council, and before the secretary undersigned, there appeared certain Indians who, through Francisco Morante and Andrés de Cervantes, interpreters of the Moro language¹ stated their names as: Don Luis Amanicalao, Don Martin Panga, Don Gabriel Tuanbazar and Don Juan Batangad, Christians; and Salalila, Calao, Amarlenguayguay, pagans and Doña Francisca Saygan, chiefs of the villages of Tondo, Capaymisilo,² with another large group of chieftains.

Through the said interpreters they stated that they had learned that his lordship was going to write to his Majesty in the ship that is ready to sail for New Spain. Since they are subjected to so many abuses, grievances and vexations, as it is known and evident to all, they humbly begged his lordship to please give a very detailed report of it to his Majesty, as they know that once his Majesty comes to know the toils they suffer, he will try to solve them.

They were asked to tell and specify more in concrete what things they wanted his Majesty to be informed of. They replied

los agravios que reciben, y hay necesidad de remedio, es que los alcaldes mayores les hacen muchas molestias y vejaciones por haber, como hay, dentro de tres leguas cuatro alcaldes mayores, los cuales y sus oficiales les llevan, por cosas livianas, grandes penas y les toman el arroz que ellos tienen al precio que quieren y después se lo vuelven a vender muy caro; y lo mismo es de todas las demás cosas de bastimentos y grangerías.

Demás de ésto los sacan a bogar muy a menudo, que acontece acabar de llegar de una jornada, que han estado un mes, y los vuelven luego a apercibir para otra; y no les pagan cosa alguna sino que en cada pueblo echan derrama entre los naturales para pagar a los que van; y que si alguna vez les pagan es muy poco, y esto pocas veces.

Y por las muchas vejaciones que reciben se han despoblado ahora mucha cantidad de indios de Tondo, Capaymisilo y otros pueblos cercanos a esta ciudad de Manila y se han ido a otras provincias a vivir, de lo cual se les ha seguido a los principales mucho daño y pérdida, porque ha habido principal que se le han ido y ausentado cien indios de trescientos que tenía, y les hacen pagar a los dichos principales el tributo por los que se les huyen y mueren, y por los esclavos que tienen y muchachos pequeños, y si no lo pagan los echan en el cepo y azotan, y a otros los amarran en unos postes y los tienen allí hasta que pagan; y demás de ésto no labran oro porque les hacen pagar el quinto, y si no lo manifiestan se lo toman por perdido, aunque sea de su oro viejo; y si les vuelven el oro es pagando buena pena.

Y no les quieren dejar los alcaldes mayores comprar arroz porque ellos lo recogen todo; y si se vienen a quejar de los agravios, por solo ello, los prenden y echan en el cepo y les llevan el carcelaje. Y que son tantas las aflicciones y molestias que tienen que no lo pueden sufrir, y se quieren ir fuera de ésta isla, o a lo menos a alguna encomienda de particular, porque en los dichos pueblos del rey no pueden sufrir los alcaldes mayores.

[Fdo.] Fr. Domingo de Salazar
Obispo de las Filipinas
AGI, Filipinas 74; 84

that the vexations they receive, and which ought to be redressed, are grievances and vexations received at the hands of the *alcaldes mayores*, since there are four *alcaldes mayores* within three leagues. These and their officials impose very heavy penalties for light offences. They take the rice they have at the price they want, and sell it back to them at a much higher price. The same happens with all the other provisions and merchandise.

Furthermore, oftentimes the Indians are forced to act as oarsmen; it may happen to have just arrived from one expedition, where they stayed for a month, and once again they are asked to get ready for the next. They are paid nothing, but in each town a tax is imposed upon the natives to pay for those who go. If perchance they are paid anything this is little and very seldom.

Many Indians from Tondo, Capaymisilo and other villages near this city of Manila have gone to live in other provinces due to the vexations they receive, from which great evils and losses have accrued to the chieftains. for there are chieftains from whom one hundred Indians out of three hundred have turned aside and taken leave; the chieftains are made to pay the taxes for those who have fled and have died, and for their slaves and little ones. If they do not pay, they are placed in the stocks and kept there until they pay. Moreover they do not produce gold, for they are made to pay the fifth,³ if they do not make a statement, it is forfeited even though it be old gold. The gold is returned only if a big sum is paid.

The *alcaldes mayores* do not want them to buy the rice for they buy it themselves; if they dare to complain, just for that they are placed in the stocks and have to pay the prison fees. The afflictions and vexations are so many that they cannot endure them any longer. They want to leave this island, or at least to go to an encomienda of private persons, for they cannot endure the *alcaldes mayores* in the said towns of the king.

[Signed] Fr. Domingo

Bishop of the Philippines

¹ Moro language here stands for Tagalog, the local dialect of the inhabitants of Manila, Tondo and neighboring provinces.

² We have not been able to identify the town or village of Capaymisilo. We conjecture it was part of what today is Sta. Cruz district.

³ By Spanish legislation, one fifth of all gold mined in the Indies was reserved to the crown. This referred to new gold from mines, not old gold had in the form of precious objects inherited from their forefathers.

LETTER OF DOMINGO DE SALAZAR, O.P., FIRST BISHOP
OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO PHILIP II

Manila, June 18, 1582

INTRODUCTION

This letter of Salazar reaches to the core the rights of the *patronato real* of the Spanish kings over all the churches in the Indies. With Philip II, the rights of the *patronato* were increased. During the XVII century these rights grew so much that there was a need for codification. The Church in the Indies, though financially supported by the crown, lost a great deal of its freedom of action. Without the royal *fiat* practically nothing could be done in the Indies. Rome played a relatively minor role in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Spanish overseas dominions. Due to this close union of Church and State, and the overbearing influence of the crown over the Church, the history of the overseas territories is full of instances of bitter quarrels between bishops, on the one hand, and the representatives of the king, or vicepatrons, on the other. These petty quarrels sapped a lot of energy from both sides and, in a way, retarded the process of evangelization and hispanization of America and the Philippines.

The letter presents a good picture of how Salazar initially organized the church of Manila and his bishopric covering the whole of the Philippines. Unfortunately, his diocese was so poor

that even the material church could not be built. Manila was without a solid cathedral church until the time of Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas (1590-1593).

Salazar notifies the king of his quarrels with the religious, most especially the Augustinians. He accepts that without the religious the church in the Indies would collapse but begs the king to decide, once and for all, who should be the ecclesiastical leader and head in the Philippines.

Unfortunately, the problem in the Philippines was just beginning and the religious orders were very proud of their privileges vis-à-vis the rights of bishops. The influence of the religious orders in the Philippines was so vital and widespread that, to a certain extent, they shaped the history of the nation. They can rightly be called the makers of the Philippines.

CARTA DEL PRIMER OBISPO DE FILIPINAS, FRAY DOMINGO DE SALAZAR, O.P. DANDO CUENTA DE LAS PERSONAS QUE HA NOMBRADO PARA LAS DIGNIDADES DE SU IGLESIA

Manila, 18 de Junio, 1582

Por una carta que vuestra majestad fue servido mandarme escribir de Tomar, a veinte y dos de Mayo del año pasado de ochenta y uno, veo lo que vuestra majestad manda acerca de lo tocante al título y patronazgo real que los reyes de España tienen en todas las iglesias de las Indias, lo cual yo guardaré y cumpliré como soy obligado.

Y esté vuestra majestad cierto que así como me pesa de que las justicias reales se metan en lo que toca a la jurisdicción eclesiástica, y que no dejen a los ministros de ella usar libremente de sus oficios, y así también procuro que la jurisdicción real sea respetada y acaptada [sic] y que mis oficiales en todo se guarden de hacer cosa alguna contra ella y que a ella le pertenezca. Y es tan necesaria esta consideración en los ministros de estos dos foros que muchos, por no la tener, son causa de pleitos y alteraciones; y porque para poder guardar lo que vuestra majestad acerca de esto manda, si hay alguna cosa más de lo que por esta carta parece, sea servido de mandar y enviar una copia de ello para que quede en el archivo de esta iglesia y pueda constar a nuestros sucesores lo que están obligados a hacer.

LETTER OF DOMINGO DE SALAZAR, O.P., FIRST BISHOP
OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO PHILIP II

Manila, June 18, 1582

Through a letter your Majesty was kind enough to send me, dated at Tomar, on the twenty second of May of the past year of eighty one, I see what your Majesty orders regarding the title and the royal patronage enjoyed by the Kings of Spain over all the churches in the Indies. I shall keep and obey it, as is my obligation.

Let your Majesty rest assured that as I protest when the royal justices mingle themselves in matters pertaining to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and do not let the ecclesiastical ministers freely exercise their offices, I also attempt to see that the royal jurisdiction be respected and obeyed, and that my officers refrain from doing anything against it and anything pertaining to it. This mutual respect is so essential to the ministers of the two *fora*, that many who lack it are the cause of law-suits and disturbances. In order to observe your Majesty's decrees about this, or about anything else outside what is found in the letter, your Majesty may wish to send and remit a copy of it to be placed in the archives of this church, for our successors to know what their obligation is.

Quanto al cumplimiento de lo que por la carta se me manda, ya consta a su majestad que yo soy el primer obispo de estas islas, y que por virtud de las letras apostólicas que para la erección de esta iglesia se expidieron, y porque así vuestra majestad lo pidió al sumo pontífice al tiempo que se le trató de la erección de la catedral de estas islas, yo tengo derecho para instituir la primera vez todas las prebendas de la catedral y beneficios de todo el obispado y nombrar personas que las sirvan; y después de una vez nombradas, en vacando la presentación de ellas, por virtud de las dichas letras apostólicas, pertenece a vuestra majestad y sus sucesores, lo cual queda aquí ordenado por un capítulo de la erección que yo he hecho, cuyo trasunto, y de todas las demás cosas que contiene la dicha erección, envío a vuestra majestad para que, vista allá, vuestra majestad vea si es servido que en ella se mude, quite o añada alguna cosa, que como vuestra majestad lo mandare y ordenare así se hará, que pues vuestra majestad con tan santo celo mira por el bien de los que acá estamos, y con tan santas leyes lo provee, justo es que todos obedezcamos y tengamos por luz y guía lo que por vuestra majestad fuere ordenado.

Y pluguiere a Dios rey cristianísimo que como vuestra majestad tan cristianamente provee lo que al bien de estas tierras conviene, así ejecutasen los que acá, en lugar de vuestra majestad, tienen el gobierno, que Dios sería muy servido y su santa ley ampliada y la fé católica recibida y vuestra majestad amado de todas estas naciones. Pero, ay dolor, que todo ésto es al contrario, como en otra parte a vuestra majestad tengo referido, por lo cual hacemos tan poco fruto entre los naturales los que acá somos ministros del Evangelio. De aquí adelante haremos menos si las cosas van como hasta aquí.

Yo llegué a esta ciudad a diez y siete de Septiembre; y detúveme en hacer la erección hasta veinte y uno de Septiembre, que la hice de la mejor manera en forma que a mi se me alcanzó, conformándome en todo lo que pude con la iglesia metropolitana de México. Y por no haber diezmos no instituimos más de dos dignidades: deanato y chantría y dos canonicatos, porque a solos cuatro manda vuestra majestad, por su real cédula, que se les dé entretenimiento de la real hacienda, hasta que haya rentas suficientes.

Regarding obedience to everything expected from me in the letter, your Majesty knows that I am the first Bishop of these Islands. By virtue of the apostolic letters issued for the erection of this church, and because your Majesty so petitioned the Holy Father at the time of the erection of the cathedral of these islands, I have the right to establish, for the first time, all the prebends of the cathedral and benefices throughout my bishopric and appoint persons to serve them. Should their appointments fall vacant, the presentation of those persons, in virtue of the said apostolic letters, belongs to your Majesty and his successors. Everything has been so ordered in a chapter on the erection of the cathedral which I have made. I send your Majesty the transcript of the chapter and of everything else contained in the said erection to be examined there by your Majesty and see if anything need to be changed, deleted or added. Whatever your Majesty shall order and decree shall be done, as your Majesty, with holy zeal, looking over the welfare of those residing here and, with holy laws, thus commands. It is good for us to obey and take your Majesty as light and guide in everything that has been decreed.

I pray, most Christian King, it might please God that what your Majesty decrees in accordance with the Christian spirit, for the welfare of these distant lands, might also be executed by those who, in your Majesty's name, hold the government here. God would be very well served and his holy law and Catholic faith accepted and your Majesty loved in all these nations. But, alas, the opposite happens, as I refer to your Majesty in another part. Due to this, those of us who are ministers of the Gospel accomplish very little among the natives. We shall accomplish less in the future if things continue as they have been thus far.

I arrived in this city on the seventeenth of September and withheld the erection of the church until the twenty first of September. I erected it to the best of my ability, conforming myself in everything possible with the Metropolitan Church of Mexico. Since there were no tithes, I establish only two dignities: the deanship and the precentorship and two canonries, because your Majesty orders, through your royal cedula, to support only four from the royal exchequer, until there will be enough revenue.

Para el deanato nombré a Don Diego Vázquez de Mercado, canónigo que había sido en la catedral de Guatemala, y graduado en cánones en la Universidad de México; y ahora sirve de provisor. Es natural de Madrigal, de edad de treinta y ocho años.

Para la chantría a Francisco de Morales, clérigo que había sido en el dicho obispado de Guatemala y tenido cargo en él de indios muchos años. Es de edad de [en blanco] años, natural de [blanco].

De los dos canónigos, el uno se llama Francisco Pareja, natural de Almodóvar del Campo. Será de edad de [blanco] años; el otro se llama Gonzalo del Castillo, natural de la Villa de Torantes, del obispado de Burgos, en la Rioja. Es de edad de treinta y seis años; donde a ciertos días nombré por canónigo a Santiago de Cabito, que tenía y tengo ahora por cura y vicario de la villa de Cáceres, en la provincia de Camarines. Es natural de [en blanco]; de edad de treinta años. Todos éstos vinieron conmigo, unos desde España y otros desde México, porque así lo mandó vuestra majestad que a costa de su real hacienda viniesen conmigo seis clérigos. Yo traía siete; el uno murió en la mar y el otro se metió fraile francisco; y los otros cinco son los aquí nombrados.

Hallé cuando vine en éstas islas seis clérigos; el uno se llama Juan de Vivero, que ha muchos años que está en esta tierra, y ha sido vicario en ella. A éste tengo determinado dar la tesorería, porque es hombre honrado y, aunque no sabe mucho, es buen eclesiástico y ha dado buen ejemplo el tiempo que aquí ha vivido. Es de edad de [en blanco] y natural [en blanco]. El otro se llama Grabiél de la Cruz, licenciado en artes y bachiller en teología, graduado en Alcalá. Este tengo por cura y vicario de la villa Fernandina, en Ilocos, y visitador de aquella provincia. Es de edad de [en blanco] y natural de [en blanco]. Hombre virtuoso y bien inclinado y amigo de estudiar. En habiendo oportunidad tengo pensado darle la maestrescuela. El otro se llama Don Juan de Armendáriz, navarro. Oyó teología en Salamanca. Será de edad de treinta y cinco años; natural de un pueblo de Navarra que se llama [en blanco]. Es hombre virtuoso y medianamente docto. Téngole por cura y vicario en la villa de Arévalo, que acá llamamos Otón, en la isla de Panay, y le tengo determinado para una canongía. El quinto se llama Luis Barruelo natural de Palencia,

I appointed Don Diego Vázquez de Mercado² to the deanship. He had been a canon of the cathedral of Guatemala and is a graduate in Canon Law from the University of Mexico. He is now the provisor. He was born in Madrigal and is thirty eight years old.

For the precentorship I appointed Francisco de Morales, who had been a cleric in the bishopric of Guatemala and had been for many years in charge of the Indians there. His age is [blank] and he was born in [blank].

Of the two canons one is called Francisco de Pareja, of Almodóvar del Campo. His age [blank]. The name of the other is Gonzalo del Castillo, from the town of Tornantos, bishopric of Burgos, in the Rioja. He is thirty-six years old. A few days ago I appointed as canon, Santiago de Cabito, who was and still is assigned as priest and vicar of the city of Caceres, in the province of Camarines.³ He was born [blank]. He is thirty years old. All of them came with me, some from Spain, others from Mexico, because your Majesty decreed that six clerics would come with me at your royal expense. I was bringing seven. One died at sea and the other became a Franciscan. The others are the five here mentioned.

When I arrived to these islands I found six more clerics. One is called Juan de Vivero,⁴ who has spent many years here, and has been the vicar in this land. I have decided to make him the treasurer because he is a good priest and has given good example during his stay here. His age is [blank]. He was born in [blank]. The other is Gabriel de la Cruz, who holds a licentiate in arts and and a bachelor's degree in theology from Alcalá. I have him as priest and vicar in Villa Fernandina,⁵ in the Ilocos and as visitator of that province. His age is [blank]. He was born in [blank]. He is a virtuous person, well inclined and a friend of study. As soon as I have the chance I will make him *maestrescuela* [teacher of theology]. The name of the other is Don Juan de Armendáriz, Navarrese. He took up theology in Salamanca, and is around thirty-five years old. He was born in a village of Navarra, called [blank]. He is virtuous but not very learned. I have him as priest and vicar of the town of Arévalo,⁶ called here Oton, in the Island of Panay. I have decided to make him a canon.

de edad de cincuenta años. Ordenóse sacerdote en la isla de Sto. Domingo y pasó a esta tierra habrá cuatro años. Envíole por cura y vicario de la villa de Cebu, que ahora ha hecho ciudad el gobernador. El otro se llama Pero Fernández, portugués, de edad de más de cuarenta años. Es hombre que sabe poco, pero virtuoso. Téngole en un partido de indios en la provincia de Ilocos. El otro se llama Baltazar de Miranda, natural de México, de edad de treinta y cuatro años. Vino desterrado de México por el doctor Portillo, siendo al presente provisor y hasta que yo vine no había dado buen ejemplo. Ya está enmendado. Como se hubiere adelante, en bien en mal, me habré yo en favorecelle o castigalle.

Por ser tan pocos los prebendados, que con solo ellos no podía la iglesia ser bien servida, de los estudiantes que conmigo vinieron y antes estaban acá, ordené ocho: tres diáconos y cinco subdiáconos. Con ellos y con otros cuatro que ordené de corona está la iglesia razonablemente servida, a satisfacción del pueblo, y aún del mio porque los prebendados acuden muy bien a los oficios divinos y todos los demás ayudan bien y hacen lo que pueden. De los que ordené de orden sacro, los dos saben razonablemente; el uno diácono, de veinte y tres años, bachiller en artes, llámase Francisco Rosales, natural de México. El otro es subdiácono. Llámase Antonio de Villalobos. Tiene acá sus padres y él y ellos son naturales de Mérida, en Extremadura, de edad de veinte y dos años. De los otros seis, aunque unos saben más que otros, pero todos tan poco que sino fuera por la necesidad que de ellos tenía la iglesia no me atreviera a darles las órdenes hasta que supieran más. Y así los pienso tener en este grado hasta que merezcan otro mayor. Aprovechando van cada día, aunque no tanto como yo quisiera porque tenemos falta de preceptor de gramática; y para remedio de esto apliqué el noveno que se debe al hospital a un colegio, que el Concilio Tridentino llama seminario, donde puedan enseñar estos estudiantes y otros pobres que hay en la ciudad, pues para los pobres que ahora hay y habrá en algunos tiempos adelante basta el hospital real que, en nombre de vuestra majestad, edificó el doctor Sande. Y porque la manera cómo esto se hizo va explicada en la erección, allí lo mandará vuestra majestad ver y avisarme si es servido que así se haga.

Vuestra Majestad, a suplicación mía, envió una cédula en que manda al gobernador señale competente sustento a cuatro pre-

The fifth is called Luis Barruelo, born in Palencia, around fifty years old. He was ordained in the island of Santo Domingo. He came here about four years ago. I am sending him as priest and vicar of the town of Cebu, now made a city by the governor. The name of the other is Pedro Fernández, Portuguese, over forty years old. He is not very learned, but is a virtuous person. I have him in a district of Indians, in the province of Ilocos. The name of the other is Baltasar de Miranda, born in Mexico, thirty-four years old. He was exiled from Mexico by Doctor Portillo. He is the provisor at present. Up to my arrival he had not given good example. He has changed. I will favour or punish him according to his good or bad conduct.

Since the church could not be well served with the few prebendaries there were, I ordained eight from among the students who came with me and those who were here: three deacons and five subdeacons. With these and four more whom I gave the tonsure, the church is reasonably well served, to the people's satisfaction and mine, because the prebendaries attend diligently to the divine office, and all the others serve well and do what they can. From among those I ordained to sacred orders, two of them are reasonably learned; one of them is a deacon called Francisco Rosales, twenty three years old, with a bachelor's degree in arts. He was born in Mexico. The other one is a subdeacon. His name is Antonio de Villalobos. His parents are also here and both the parents and he are from Mérida, Extremadura. He is twenty two years old. The other six, though some are more learned than the others, know so little that I would never have ordained them until they knew something more had it not been on account of the need the church had of them. I will keep them in their present stage until they are worthy to pass to a higher one. They are improving every day, but not as much as I would wish, for we lack a precentor of grammar. As a remedy for this I applied the ninth that is due to the hospital, to a college that the Council of Trent calls seminary, where these students, and other poor ones found in the city, can be taught, for the hospital built in the name of your Majesty by Dr. Sande is good enough for the present poor and those of the future. How this was done is explained in the letter of erection. Your Majesty may order this to be seen and inform me if the way it was done is acceptable.

bendados, y se les pague de la real hacienda. En virtud de ella señaló al dean quinientos pesos; al chante cuatrocientos; a cada uno de los dos canónigos trescientos pesos de tepuzque, de valor de ocho reales cada uno, por cada año, mientras no hubiere diezmos. Traje otra cédula de vuestra majestad en que manda que a cada cura de este obispado se le den de la caja real cincuenta mil maravedíes. Hay en esta ciudad dos curas y aun no bastan. Y porque los aprovechamientos son pocos, y los diezmos no se han comenzado a pagar, ni tienen de ello pensamiento los vecinos de esta ciudad, a vuestra majestad suplico sea servido mandar que, a cada uno de los curas que en esta iglesia hubiere, le dén de la caja real cincuenta mil maravedíes, que aun con ellos se sustentarán miserablemente, y sin ellos no es posible.

Yo instituí los diezmos según que su santidad y vuestra majestad me lo mandan; y mandé que de primero de Julio del año de ochenta y uno, que es cuando a esta isla llegué, comenzáse a correr la obligación de pagarlos, porque aunque vuestra majestad manda que se me paguen las quinientos mil maravedies desde el día del *fiat*, no habiendo diezmos, pareciónos al gobernador y a mi que sería mucha turbación para los vecinos pedirles los diezmos desde tres años que había que se expidieron las bulas. Háseles hecho tan nuevo a los vecinos de estas islas como si no lo fuera en la Iglesia el llevarlos. Háse tratado pleito ante mi entre el cabildo de la iglesia y vecinos de la ciudad, y sentencié el pleito conforme a lo aprobado y según el derecho dispone y a la universal costumbre que en todos los reinos de vuestra majestad se tiene. Apelaron de mi sentencia y entreguéles la apelación y van a México en seguimiento de ella. Podría ser que de allí acudan a vuestra majestad, según los veo porfiados para seguir esta causa y para otras cosas que al bien de esta nueva iglesia son menester.

Envía el cabildo de esta iglesia a Don Francisco Morales, chantre de ella, y para que en México informe de su justicia, y pase en España en nombre mío y de todo el cabildo, bese a vuestra majestad sus reales manos y le dé cuenta de las cosas que acá han pasado y pasan. Vuestra majestad sea servido darle crédito y nos haga a todos merced de conceder y mandar que se provea lo que en un memorial, firmado de mi nombre y de los prebendados nuestros hermanos, lleva escrito.

Your Majesty, in answer to a petition of mine, sent a *cédula* to the Governor ordering him to assign a competent allowance for four prebendaries, to be paid from the royal exchequer. In virtue of it, I have assigned every year five hundred pesos to the dean: four hundred to the precentor; three hundred *pesos de tepuzque*, valued at *ocho reales* each, to the two canons until the tithes are paid. I also brought another *cédula* of your Majesty decreeing that every pastor of this bishopric be given fifty thousand maravedies from the royal exchequer. There are two pastors in this city. They are not enough. Since the income is small and the tithes have not been paid—the citizens of this city are not even ready to hear about them—I beg your Majesty to assign to each pastor working in this church the amount of fifty thousand maravedies from the royal exchequer. With them they will live miserably and without them it will be impossible.

I decreed that the tithes be collected, in accordance with His Holiness' and your Majesty's decree. I ordered that the obligation to pay them should start from the first of July of the year eighty one, when I arrived to this island, because although your Majesty orders that I should be paid the five hundred thousand maravedies from the day of the *fiat*, since there are no tithes, it seemed to the governor and to me too big a disturbance to ask the citizens to pay the tithes since the time the bulls were issued, three years ago. This has seemed so new to the citizens of these islands as if it were not customary to pay them in the Church. A law-suit was started before me between the *cabildo* of this church and the citizens of this city. I pronounced sentence in accordance with what is customary, in accordance with what the law disposes and the universal practice in all the kingdoms of your Majesty. They appealed against my sentence. I accepted the appeal and they sent it to Mexico in its prosecution. It might be possible they may appeal to your Majesty from there, for I see them stubborn in this cause and many others necessary for the welfare of this church.

The *cabildo* of this church is sending to Mexico Francisco Morales, its precentor, to inform of the justice of its cause and also to proceed on to Spain in my name and in the name of the whole *cabildo*, to kiss your Majesty's royal hands and inform of the things that have happened and are happening here. May

Y pues tratamos de cosas eclesiásticas, no será fuera de propósito referir en ésta a vuestra majestad lo que me ha pasado con los religiosos para que mande lo que más servido sea. Antes que yo viniese tuvieron los padres de San Agustín, que fueron los primeros en estas islas, la jurisdicción eclesiástica, y después vinieron los franciscos descalzos y se la quitaron a los agustinos. Unos y otros la ejercitaron con tanta autoridad y estrépito de jurisdicción como si propiamente fueran obispo. Nombraban vicarios y provisores, y tenían en sus casas ordinario tribunal, como yo lo tengo en la mía. Yo he procurado informarme con qué autoridad hacían esto y ellos mismos no saben dar más razón de decir que con la autoridad omnímota que concedió en las Indias Adriano Sexto a los mendicantes lo habían hecho; que si así es, hay necesidad que vuestra majestad envíe declarado si por este breve pueden los peralados de las religiones usar de tanta autoridad como estos padres acá han usado, porque hallo determinadas muchas causas que, si ellos no han sido jueces competentes, es necesario volver por ellas. Y aún hallo hechos algunos borrones harto dificultosos de enmendar. Y a mi me parece que por virtud de aquel breve los frailes franciscos no pudieron quitar la jurisdicción a los agustinos; y hay harto escrúpulo si las cosas que por ello determinaron fueron válidas. Porfían también estos padres que en aquella sazón no había de haber apelación de ellos sino a Roma, porque dicen ser jueces apostólicos y así se nombraban en las provisiones y cartas que dan. Venido yo porfiaron los religiosos, mayormente los de San Agustín, que tenían más autoridad que yo, porque con esta Omnímota que tanto ellos extienden no hay quien con ellos se pueda valer. Llegaron a tanto que dijeron que en los pueblos de los indios que ellos tienen a cargo no era yo mas que obispo de anillo y que no tenía que entrar ni salir con ellos más de confirmarles, y que entre ellos y mi había prevención de causas.

Han pasado sobre esto muchas cosas que sería largo y molesto referirlas aquí. El chanfre lleva testimonio de todo lo que ha pasado y por cartas que han escrito y procesos que han hecho constará a vuestra majestad la poca razón que han tenido.

Hay mucha necesidad de que vuestra majestad les mande no excedan de lo que sus privilegios les conceden, y guarden y cumplan lo que por vuestra majestad les está mandado en no tener

your Majesty give him credit and the favour to decree that we be granted what is included in a written memorial signed by me and by the prebendaries, our brothers.

Since we are dealing with ecclesiastical affairs, it will not be out of place to mention to your Majesty what has happened to me with the religious, so that your Majesty may decree what would be most pleasing. Before I came here, the Augustinian fathers, the first ones to come to these islands, exercised the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Afterwards came the Discalced Franciscans and took it away from the Augustinians. Both of them exercised it with such authority and abuse of jurisdiction as if they were bishops. They appointed vicars and provisors and held ordinary courts in their houses, as I have in mine. I have tried to be informed with what authority they did this, and they do not give any other reason except to answer that they had done it based on the full authority —*Omnimoda*— granted to the mendicants in the Indies by Adrian VI. If this is so, your Majesty is obliged to declare whether by this brief the superiors of the orders are allowed to exercise so much authority as these fathers have exercised, for I find that some causes have been decided by them, and if they were not competent judges, it is necessary to go over them again. I even find some very black spots hard to erase. It seems to me that, based on that brief, the Franciscan Friars had no authority to take away the jurisdiction from the Augustinians. And there are scruples if the things decided by them, based on it, were valid. These Fathers also claim that in the cases decided by them there is no appeal but to Rome because they call themselves apostolic judges that is how they call themselves in their provisions and letters. When I arrived they opposed me, especially the friars of Saint Augustine, saying they had more authority than I, because based on this *Omnimoda*, so widely over extended by them, nobody can have any say with them. They went so far as to say that in the villages of the Indians under their care I was only "bishop of the ring" —honorary bishop—. I had nothing else to do but to confirm their subjects because between us there was right of prevention.⁸

Many things have happened over this and it would be long and painful to refer to them. The precentor brings testimony of

cepos y cárceles en sus casas, ni determinar judicialmente causas matrimoniales, porque en lo uno han excedido mucho y en lo otro han hecho muchos errores harto dificultosos de enmendar; y los que en sus monasterios no tienen las prisiones las tienen en casa de los fiscales, allí los aprisionan.

Esta libertad y exención que los religiosos pretenden por vía de sus privilegios no entendidos ni usados conforme a la intención de quien se los concedió, sino extendidos a lo que ellos quieren más de lo que conviene, no solo perjudica a los obispos que de esta manera no les queda jurisdicción, porque lo tienen todo los frailes, sino también es muy perjudicial y dañosa a los mismos indios; porque aunque no se puede negar, y es así la verdad, y yo la confieso, que los religiosos en todas las Indias han hecho gran fruto, pero también es verdad que entre ellos hay muchos muy mozos y sin letras y no muy fundados en religión; éstos son los atrevidos y los que sin entender los privilegios los extienden hasta el cielo, no estiman los obispos, ni se les da por ello nada, y con la exención que tienen, atrévense a mucho más de lo que conviene.

Afirmo a vuestra majestad, con toda verdad, que después que vine a esta isla tantas quejas me han venido a dar los indios de los religiosos que los tienen a cargo como de los encomenderos y alcaldes mayores, porque los tratan muy ásperamente, echándoles en los cepos y azotándolos por causas muy livianas, llevándoles penas pecuniarias excesivas, y aun condenándolos a galeras. Y yo, entre otras, he dado por ningunas dos sentencias en que dos religiosos habían condenado dos indios principales, al uno sin culpa y al otro con muy poca.

Usan acá los padres agustinos a llevar dinero por las sepulturas de los indios; y ha habido principal que le han llevado cincuenta tostones por su sepultura, y a otros han tenido en la cárcel porque no lo querían pagar, o no podían. Y todo esto es verdad, y lo he sacado yo a luz con muchos testigos de indios y españoles.

Allá envió la información de todo, para que vuestra majestad sepa lo que acá pasa y mande remediar estos excesos; porque certifico a vuestra majestad que de tratar los religiosos a los indios con tanta aspereza andan muy atemorizados y dejan muchos de bautizarse, por ver la aspereza con que tratan a los bautizados.

everything and by the letters written and the processes opened, your Majesty will see how wrong they were.

They need to be commanded by your Majesty not to go beyond what their privileges grant them, to abide by and obey what your Majesty has ordered them, regarding first to have stocks and prisons in their houses, and second to determine judicially matrimonial causes, because, in the first, they have gone to great excesses, and, in the second, they had committed many mistakes, difficult now to be straightened out. These who lack prisons in their houses, have them in the houses of the fiscals. They keep the prisoners there.

This liberty and exemption sought by the religious, based on privileges not well understood, or not used in conformity with the intention of the giver, but extended more than is just to what they like, not only is prejudicial to the bishops who are left without jurisdiction, because all is in the hands of the friars, but also is very prejudicial and harmful to the very Indians. It cannot be denied, because this is the truth, and I confess it, that the religious have achieved great things in all the Indies, but it is also true that among them there are some very young ones, without letters, and not well grounded in the religious life. These are the bold ones and the ones who, without understanding their privileges, extend them to the sky. They do not respect the bishops and care nothing about it and with the exemption they have, go beyond what is proper.

I tell your Majesty in all truth that, after coming to this island, the Indians have come as many times to complain about the religious who have them under their care as about the encomenderos and alcaldes mayores, for they deal with them with asperity, putting them in the stocks and flogging them for light causes, imposing upon them excessive pecuniary penalties and even condemning them to the galleys. Among other things I have annulled two sentences given by two religious condemning two Indian chiefs. The first without cause and the second with a light one.

The fathers here are used to taking money for burial from the Indians. They took fifty *tostones* for the burial of a chief. They have put others into prison for not wanting or not being

Yo por mis propias manos he bautizado muchos indios principales viejos, hombres y mujeres, por haberlos tratado con afabilidad y amor, certificándoles que de aquí adelante no los azotarán por la doctrina; con los cuales los religiosos hasta ahora no habían podido acabar que se bautizasen ni arrostrasen a ello. Estaban persuadidos estos padres que si no era por mal no podían ser atraídos estos indios; para prueba de que esto sienten así, mande vuestra majestad ver algunas preguntas del interrogatorio que acá presentaron ante el gobernador, para hacer una información, y constará lo que yo digo ser así. La séptima pregunta del interrogatorio no va allá como la presentaron al principio; y está en la original, aunque borrada, porque yo les afeé y reñí que tal cosa dijese de los indios, y por eso la mudaron en la forma que allá va. Yo envío a vuestra majestad la dicha séptima pregunta de la manera que ellos al principio la presentaron, para que se vea lo que estos padres sienten de los indios que tienen a cargo, y los [sic] que éstos sienten, cómo los podrán tratar con amor y benignidad, como nuestra fe lo ha menester y la santa religión que profesamos lo pide.

Humilmente suplico a vuestra majestad no se entienda que porque lo que aquí digo quiero en manera alguna murmurar de las santas religiones, ni quitarles algo de lo mucho que se debe a la santidad que en ellas hay, porque muy bien conozco yo y entiendo lo mucho que importan en la Iglesia y cuán perdidos quedaríamos si ellas faltasen; sino lo que quiero decir es que vuestra majestad sea servido mandar que se dé orden cómo los religiosos de estas santas órdenes, con la libertad que tienen, o piensan tener, con sus privilegios, que por estar tan lejos nadie los puede ir a la mano, no sean causa de que los obispos sean ultrajados, impedidos de que no hagan sus oficios, y que de sus súbditos no sean respetados.

Y que también se remedie que en estas tierras no haya tantas cabezas en lo espiritual, pues en todos los gobiernos en cosa perjudicial y dañosa, sino que así como en el gobierno temporal todos obedecen a uno, y de lo contrario se seguiría la perdición de esta tierra, que lo mismo sea en lo espiritual, pues no hay menos necesidad del buen gobierno en ello que en lo temporal. Y éste uno sea quien vuestra majestad mandare; y no para que a éste tal le estén las órdenes sujetas en su gobierno, sino para que en lo que

able to pay. All this is true. I have come to know it from many witnesses, both Indians and Spanish.

I send there the information about this for your Majesty to know what is happening here and correct these excesses. I certify to your Majesty that due to the harshness with which the religious deal with the Indians, the latter are very afraid and many are not baptized in order not to experience the same harshness with which they deal with the baptized. I have baptized with my own hands some old Indian chiefs, both men and women, for I dealt with them with affability and love, assuring them that in the future they would not be flogged on account of the doctrine. The religious had not been able up to now to convince them to be baptized or opt for baptism. These fathers were convinced that only through harsh means can the Indians be attracted. As a proof of this, your Majesty may ask to see some questions from the interrogatory presented here before the governor, to open up an inquiry, and your Majesty will see that what I say is true. The seventh question of the interrogatory is not going there as it was formulated at the beginning. It is erased in the original because I decried and rebuked them for saying such a thing of the Indians. Due to this they changed it into the present formulation. I send your Majesty the said seventh question in the manner they formulated it at the beginning, in order for you to see what these fathers feel about the Indians under their care, and feeling this, to ask how they can deal with them with love and mercy, as our holy faith and the holy religion we profess demand!

I humbly begged your Majesty not to think that I try to criticize the holy religious, or intend to take away anything due to the great sanctity found in them. I know and understand very well how important they are for the Church, and how lost we would be if they were to disappear. What I want to say is that your Majesty should be pleased to command the religious of these holy orders not to be the cause for the bishops to be despised or hindered in the fulfilment of their offices, or not be respected by their subjects on account of the liberty they have, or think they have, based on their privileges, thinking that since they are so far away nobody is allowed to contradict them.

Also your Majesty should put a remedy to the existence of so many heads in the spiritual sphere, for this is something prejudicial

toca a la conversión, doctrina de los naturales no tenga cada uno licencia de hacer lo que quisiese, sino que todos vamos por un camino y sigamos una regla.

También suplico a vuestra majestad sea servido mandar que vengan a estas islas muchos religiosos de todas órdenes, encargando a los preladados que miren las personas que envían, porque mozos y poco disciplinados hacen grandísimo daño por acá; y también mande vuestra majestad que vengan clérigos que sean buenos, que hay de ellos mucha necesidad, porque son infinitas las ánimas que por falta de ministros perecen en estas islas.

Nuestro Señor la Católica Real persona de vuestra majestad muchos años guarde para bien y defensa de su santa Iglesia y amparo de los que poco podemos.

De Manila, 18 de Junio, 1582 años.

C[atólica] R[eal] M[ajestad] Besa las manos de V[uestra] M[ajestad] su menor siervo y capellán.

[Fdo.] Fr. Domingo
Obispo de Filipinas

Archivo General de Indias
Filipinas 74; 84

and harmful for all governments. Rather, as in the temporal government all obey one person, and doing the contrary would mean the ruin of this land, so the same should happen in the spiritual government, for it is as necessary to have good government in the spiritual as in the temporal order. The one to govern should be the one appointed by your Majesty, not to have the religious in their internal government subject to him, but rather that in the conversion and doctrine of the natives not everybody should have the freedom to do as he pleases, but all should follow the same way and the same rule.

I also beg your Majesty to send to these islands many religious from all the orders, ordering the superiors to select the people they send, for the young and the undisciplined ones cause terrible havoc here. Your Majesty may also order to send good clerics, for there is a serious need for them, as there are innumerable souls which perish in these islands due to the lack of ministers.

May our Lord keep the Catholic and royal person of your Majesty for many years, for the good and defense of his holy Church and protection of those who have no power.

Manila, eighteenth of June, of the year one thousand five hundred and eighty two.

Catholic Royal Majesty. Your humble servant and chaplain kisses the hands of your Majesty.

[Signed] Fr. Domingo,
Bishop of the Philippines

FOOTNOTES

¹ Philip II had been sworn in as king of Portugal by the Cortes of Thomar, Portugal, on April of 1581. It meant the union of the crowns of Portugal and Spain.

² Diego Vazquez de Mercado was born in Madrigal de las Altas Torres, Avila, Spain. He succeeded Miguel de Benavides as Archbishop of Manila in 1605, but took possession of his see in June of 1610. He served the cathedral church of Manila during the time of Salazar and some years after. He returned to Mexico and had further studies in the university there. He became bishop of Yucatan, Mexico, but was transferred to the archbishopric of Manila. This post he held until his death in 1618. He completed the cathedral edifice, applying to that work much of his patrimony.

³ The governor, Dr. Francisco Sande (1575-1580), was the real pacifier of the Philippines. He sent Captain Pedro de Chavez to the province of Camarines. In 1579 Chavez created the town of Caceres in honour of Dr. Sande, who came from the province of Caceres, Extremadura, Spain.

⁴ Juan de Vivero was the first Spanish secular priest to establish himself in the Philippines. He came in 1566 in the San Gerónimo, with Felipe de Salcedo, grandson of Legazpi. During the harrowing crossing of the Pacific and the mutiny of the San Gerónimo, Vivero rallied the loyalists to the king's flag and helped enormously in bringing the ship to Manila.

⁵ Villa Fernandina had been established by Juan de Salcedo in 1572 in honour of Prince Fernando, son of Philip II. The local Ilocano name was Vigan and is the name that has prevailed to present times.

⁶ Arevalo was established by Governor Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa in 1581. He called it Arevalo in honour of his native town of Arevalo, in Avila, Spain.

Chirino writes:

"Near a point of Iloilo, on the banks of a beautiful estero, there is to be found the town of Arevalo in imitation of the same town of Old Castille, the town of governor Don Gonzalo Ronquillo who established it in 1581", TORRES-PASTELLS, Catálogo, II, CIX.

⁷ Honorary bishop is my translation for a very colloquial sentence like *obispo de anillo*. In the mind of the Augustinians, Salazar had nothing else to do but to confirm and ordain. He could exercise his purely episcopal rights, but no episcopal jurisdiction was reserved to him.

⁸ Right of prevention is my translation for *prevención de causas*. The right of prevention means that once a cause is in one tribunal the cause cannot be transferred to another until it has been decided.