

Beloved, what can I tell you of your sister Anna? How good the Lord has been, in calling me once more to work in his vineyard. After three and a half years of rest, trials and struggles, yes struggles, for I must confess, I had trouble in resigning myself to not working or doing very little, after this long lapse of time, when I had to learn to live from day to day, to walk by faith and not by sight, the Lord in his goodness once more entrusted to me the upbringing of 24 orphan girls. At the end of July, I received a letter from Bern, in which I was asked if I would take charge of a French orphanage. A few days later, I had to appear before a committee of men and women, and finally I was unanimously appointed directress of this orphanage. You see, dear sister, how the Lord governs all things: I did not even know of this establishment, and I was summoned and appointed without having had to produce a paper, a reference of any kind. Certainly our God presides over all our lives. In the same way, I had been summoned to become the school-teacher at Billodes, five years ago. My sight having become bad there, I was sorry I had gone there, but was not the Lord preparing me to direct later a similar, but smaller, institution? Those 4 years of doing nothing also served to prepare me: the Lord made me see the impotence of man and the omnipotence of God. He prepared me by a life of self-denial and sacrifices for the great work for which he had chosen me. During those 4 years, more than ever, I experienced the fact that the Lord is good, that he is a fortress at a time of distress for all who trust in him. Dear Rosine, do you not wonder at God's plans in regard to me? It is from the depths of my heart that I exclaim: My soul, bless God, etc. On the 1st November. I took up duty under the guidance of my God, for I feel that he is with me, and is helping me in my difficult task. An assistant-mistress is employed to aid me. The girls do everything themselves, even the cooking. We live in a large two-storied house at Wabern, near Bern. You can imagine, dear sister, how great my task is, and my responsibility even more so. To bring up young girls, teach them order and cleanliness, ~~inculcate~~ inculcate in them a liking for work, is certainly not an easy thing. Particularly when one remembers that most of these children come from an environment of disorder and often also of vice. If you only knew how ~~weak and helpless~~ weak and helpless I feel, so that at every moment I must turn to those mountains whence come our help and deliverance. In general, my dear children are good girls, but what bad habits have to be combatted, what sins repressed; for I not only have to work on the intelligence of these children, but above all on the heart, on the soul. One day the Lord will ask me to account for all these young sheep, may I then be able to answer him: Here I am, and all the flock you entrusted to my care. Dearest sister, do not forget me in your prayers, or the family of which I have become the mother, so that our house may become a Bethany in which Jesus likes to rest, as once in the house of Lazarus.

We are rapidly approaching Christmas and New Year. At Christmas our girls will be delighted at the sight of the tree and the little presents they will receive. You no doubt wonder how my eyes are. There is a slight improvement, God be praised, but nevertheless I shall have to finish my life on earth with this infirmity, this thorn in the flesh. The Lord says to me: My grace is enough for you. I am astonished how one finally becomes used to everything, to ills and to blessings.

How nice it is for me to be able morning and night, in my private as well as my family worship, to pray that God may bestow his most excellent blessings on all my relatives, on all those who are dear to me. How wonderful it will be to see one another again, in heavenly Cana, never to part again. May the Lord grant that not one of our family will be excluded, and for this let us be ~~constant~~ constant in asking Him for the conversion of all those whom we carry in our hearts. Beloved sister, I have written you at length, may you not make me wait too long for one of your dear letters, and write a long one, a very long one. Do not be afraid to give me a host of details concerning you all, your activities, and you dear children.

all
And now I finish my letter with a prayer to God that he may envelop you in his love, and with my greetings and ~~xxx~~ affectionate kisses to my nephews and nieces, as well as my brother.

Goodbye my dearest, tender Rosine, receive my warmest kisses along with my sisterly greetings. Your sister who loves you

Anna

M^y address: French Orphanage at Wabern near Bern.