1013

Thomas Fossi (76)

San Angelo

April 2, 1756

Leaving soon.

J.C.P.

My Dear Thomas and Son in Christ,

In the present ordinary post I received two of your letters, one dated the sixth and the other the ninth of this past March. I have nothing to respond, except what I had in my last letter and all my letters.

Do not wall yourself in with too many practices, such as many novenas and so on. Live a life in accord with your state. Afflictive penances are not for you because your health is poor; you are weak in the head and stomach. A discreet life, mortified in yours senses and passions, is better.

Take your food morning and night in accord with your state and maintain your bodily strength so you can take care of the interests of your family, which is an obligation of justice.

Keep away from straining and forcing your head or chest because that will ruin you if you do otherwise. Do everything with a peaceful spirit and do not take the world on your shoulders, as they say. You are obliged to give an account of yourself and your children; leave the care of others to whom it belongs. I do not say that at times, if there is need and hope of doing some good, you are not to offer a charitable correction, but never be solicitous about what does not concern you. Otherwise, you will never have peace.

With regard to continence, I refer to the advice I have always given you on that issue. It is necessary to maintain freedom in giving and receiving the debt at whatsoever time. Such freedom is explicit and belongs to both. In regard to the troubles you are undergoing, you have the remedy in holy matrimony. I cannot say any more than that you need to consult your confessor verbally. Meanwhile, I cannot take it up.

I am leaving after Easter for the missions and will return only for a short time. Then I will place myself under care, which will last until the sun is in Leo,385 because I am sickly and inclined to dropsy. So you can well see that I cannot have the consolation of having you here because of the bad air. For the rest, think about what has already been said. Since you are the head of the house, you cannot put yourself at risk on the sea or of grave sickness caused by unhealthful air, in which you necessarily sleep with danger to your life. I am writing in haste and recommend myself to your prayers and those of all your family. I am from the heart,

Your affectionate, obligated servant,

Paul of the Cross

385. In the month of August.