



1884: At Lavigerie's request, Pope Leo XIII restored the episcopal see of Carthage. Lavigerie became Archbishop of Carthage and Primate of Africa.

1887: The Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII addressed a Brief to Lavigerie in which he said: "The distinguished services you have rendered to Africa recommend you so highly that you seem comparable to the men who have best received from Catholicism and civilization."

Letter to Father Bridoux (10th November 1883)

My dear Father,

In keeping with the wishes of the Council, I designate le père Le Vasseur as the only textbook for ceremonies to be followed. I want the superior general to write a circular immediately to all the formation houses, starting with those in Tunis, telling them that from now on the master of ceremonies must be one fixed individual and that his duties must not pass to the newest arrival, as has happened up to now. He must also tell the superior to appoint, as soon as possible, the most able of his confreres to carry out this function. At the same time, he will be good enough to add some remarks which have now become necessary on the importance that is supposed, in our Society, to be attached to the ceremonies and the sacred rites: the general slovenliness or ignorance shown in this regard is truly shameful.

Since I am speaking to you about this, I shall also say a word that I want you to convey to the Council concerning the clerical dress of our missionaries when they go out. You already know that the chapter of your Society had to deal with this topic on my initiative. In Algiers, and in towns in general, because of your Arab clothing on the one hand, and the bad habits which have been adopted on the other, it was found that, out in the streets, our Fathers were creating a very poor impression on a lot of people. It was decided by the chapter, therefore, that, in order to overcome these difficulties, they should wear the clerical overcoat and hat from now on, as they do in France and in Jerusalem.

In Tunis, I have recently been assailed by similar complaints from serious and well-intentioned people about the Fathers from the school: people

say they look more like dragoons than religious, and the Italians make this an excuse to denigrate them severely and even remove their children from their school. I have spoken to Father Dausbourg about this and told him that, if this continues, I would be forced to make them wear the clerical coat and the bi-corn hat.

In training candidates, please keep these observations always in mind. While they are in the novitiate, they are not sufficiently trained in what clothing is appropriate outside. Take as a model the Spanish Fathers to see how they behave in the streets and how they walk. You just need to look at them to see how they are like holy priests, but on seeing you we do not get the same impression.

This is a topic for the most serious reflection. The more your dress becomes different from ordinary clerical dress, the more you must compensate for this with a truly religious attitude. Here I might remind you of the rule from the Council of Trent: *In gestu, incessu, habitu, nihil sine grave, moderatum ac religione plenum prae se ferant.*

I want the Council to make these remarks the subject of a circular to be sent to all members of the Society.

