

JOHN NEPOMUCENE NEUMANN'S

SPIRITUAL JOURNAL

English translation by WILLIAM NAYDEN

Third Part: March 1 — May 4, 1835

INTRODUCTION

This is the third installment of the French part of John Neumann's *Spiritual Journal*. A fourth installment will conclude this French section and then we hope to make the German part available. The latter is approximately equal in length to the French and, in general, covers the same time-span, Oct. 1834 Nov. 1839. This third installment of the French part covers the period from March 1 to May 4, 1835. There is no entry for March 8 because Neumann was hard pressed to finish a class assignment described in the entry for the following day.

We call the reader's attention to the somewhat surprising mention of a temptation to suicide which assailed the future Saint at this extremely difficult period in his life. In addition to problems with his physical health and troublesome relationships with others in the seminary, Neumann had to endure trying temptations such as the one just mentioned. Experiences of this sort not only serve to substantiate his humanness and « normalcy »; they enable us to gauge all the more accurately the heroicity of the virtue he would eventually achieve. The biographers of Neumann apparently felt that it would be better to pass over in silence the young seminarian's temptation to suicide. However, it seems to have caused no great concern to the officials who approved the decree of heroic virtue for the Saint. Nor, in our times when psychological and psychiatric advances have become part of the popular domain, should the existence of severe depression... ephemeral, at that!... in the life of future candidate for the honors of the altar raise too many eyebrows.

In this segment, moreover, the reader will discern a growing eagerness, and at times, apprehension regarding his imminent ordination to the priesthood. These were Neumann's last months in the seminary... on one occasion he counts off the weeks that remain. However, as we shall

see, events were to conspire to delay his ordination until *after* he had reached America. Still, the tension of anticipation colors considerably the entries of this installment. It perhaps helps to explain the more intense anxiety, the almost constant edginess of his relationship with his companions and superiors during this period as well as the more pronounced introspection and insecurity of his dealings with God, the Blessed Mother etc.

As in previous installments, the pagination of the original is indicated by brackets, thus [37]; [37-a]; [37-b] etc.

[36-a] March 1, 1835

Today I had the extreme good fortune to receive Jesus Christ into my soul and body! My ardor surpassed that of other times; still, my Lord, I seem to have derived little fruit from it. Oh how hard it is to root out of my heart this apathy and lethargy! I would surely be discouraged did I not know God's grace is all-powerful. I look only for comfort from the exercises of devotion which seem so difficult to perform. Nearly always I am disappointed and then I lose heart completely. It is the love of peace and quiet rather than of my Jesus that induces [36-b] me to seek perfection. I love my Savior only as my greatest Benefactor and not as the Supreme Good Himself. My Jesus, in reality, I love myself and my own welfare more than You and Your glory. That is the source of my uneasiness. I practice certain virtues in order to merit the rewards You have promised... I desist from the sins that offend You only to avoid subsequent misery. Oh this damnable self-love of mine! It makes me fall so often and hinders my progress towards the Almighty, towards that vision of the Godhead that alone is the supreme Good in all the world.

Raise my soul to heaven, Lord, whence my Savior shall come. Dear Jesus, behold my utter desolation. Who will teach me how to love You and to despise the world and its delights? The more I think about how to detach myself from creatures the more frequently I come back to the root-cause of my misery... my selflove. Whom can I approach for advice but You, my divine Teacher? You well know what I must do to attain Your love. I need Your help... have pity on me and teach me. Extinguish this fire of self-love that defiles all my devotions, all my piety. Enlighten my spirit that I may persevere in my desire to draw near to You. Help me to be aware of the opportunities that occur for mortifying this passion that rules and ruins my soul. My Jesus, forgive me for being so slow to discern this grave fault. Help me to achieve detachment from all creatures. Holy Mary,

my Mother, pray constantly for my poor soul. Angel Guardian, watch over me. St. Joseph and my holy Patrons, pray for me and for my parents, friends and benefactors. So be it.

March 2, 1835

From the time I got up until study-period I was fairly devout. However, soon thereafter I experienced a temptation to faith that was more severe than that of yesterday or of previous days. The amount of homework weighed upon me so that I could not bring myself to study any more or finish my catechetical instruction. There was a rumor after dinner to the effect that our revered emperor is dead. Probably he is just very ill. O Sovereign of the universe, be merciful to him... he is kind and loving to his people!⁸⁶

[36-c] My pride led me to tell a lie. How miserable I am! O my soul, what is your condition now? Has God forsaken us? Has He cast us off? Is there still a chance that He will take pity on us? Or perhaps is my devotion and my anxious quest for virtue simply futile? My soul, what effect have your frequent prayers had? You try to lay your pleas before the Lord... is that just some sort of self-deception or illusion? Is it possibly unwise to deny yourself certain things which you would normally enjoy? But what else is there to do? People get bored with you! And where are all those gifts and talents of yours? Less virtuous types avoid you; your peers dislike you; the devout are shocked at you... and they spurn your company. Those that may still have some affection for you will soon cease to do so. They are making progress; you are no longer regarded as their rival in the pursuit of virtue, so they will soon forget about you. What are your prospects for the future? You will end up disgraced at school; everyone will scoff at you for your lack of health and courage. They will try to get rid of this burden that has proved so noisome to the rest.

If you should somehow succeed⁸⁷, you are going to have to teach a religion which for you has evidently proved to be largely theoretical in its tenets. Because of your ignorance and immorality... even of the sort that is rooted in your very nature... you are unable to

⁸⁶ Francis I of Austria. See *Journal* for Nov. 14, 1834, *Spic. Hist.* 25 (1977) 2, p. 360, note 40. Neumann's evaluation of the rumor proved accurate. See below under March 3, 1835. Francis died on Mar. 4, 1835. See *Journal* under this date.

⁸⁷ In receiving Holy Orders.

execute the plans you made in happier days⁸⁸. Everybody scoffs at you! That is the wretched condition of the soul God has left to its own perdition... to be unable to dwell on the past without horror or shame, on the present without bitterness, contempt and ignominy or the future without terror and despair! How can you pray when you have lost the grace of faith? How receive mercy unless you pray? And how can God save you unless He shows you His mercy?

The unmistakable symptoms of this pitiable condition are faltering progress in the way of virtue, frequent relapses together with apathy and thorough distaste for any exercise of piety. Dear Jesus Christ, I am indeed persuaded of the reality of Your assistance... but without Your grace I cannot bring myself to put my full trust in it. If it is still possible, do not let me suffer eternal ruin. I have confessed all the sins I can think of and I hope You have pardoned them. Still, I continue to be miserable. You already condemned me for all eternity. O sweet Jesus, have pity on me the poorest sinner that ever turned to You for help! So be it.

[37] Prague, March 3, 1835

After yesterday's tears, today brought me greater peace of soul and a deeper fervor too, although my former devotion has not yet revived. The temptations to faith bother me less when I consider my interior and external condition in the light of my vocation. I have been more precise today in the fulfillment of my duties because I had God's help. Today there was a High Mass at the Bishop's residence for our sick emperor. There were also Vespers at six p.m. Just as the latter commenced there occurred three bright flashes of lightning!

It has been several days now since I have meditated on a verse of the Holy Scriptures. Forgive my coldness of heart, my God. The misfortunes I experienced over the last few days made me forget all my resolutions. I wish to renew them now. Help me, dear Lord! Do not deprive me of Your grace for to suffer a wavering faith is the worst torment of all. Strengthen my faith therefore, gentle Jesus, since I still harbor a certain repugnance for the various practices of devotion.

Divine Father, I need an enlightened director who will guide me through the maze of temptations that assail me continuously. Let

⁸⁸ A reference to his plans, made with Laad and Schmid, to devote their lives to the foreign missions.

me know who he is to be... but please, let me recognize him very clearly in view of my habitual stubbornness. Well do I know, sweet Jesus, that You will not let me relapse into my former faults if I do all that I can. Still, I do need someone to comfort me after those frequent falls which shatter my faith and trust and smother every spark of my love.

Dear Father in Heaven, I desire to know my actual state of soul and also the means to correct it. Spiritual books seem only to foster my pride. Because I do not know myself thoroughly nor properly appreciate the vanity and shame in my character, I cannot fully explain my moral condition to a capable director of souls. Sometimes it still seems to me that I am living in an ideal world that I have dreamed up myself. At other times it would appear that the devil has simply deluded me. At still others I feel almost drugged with dangerous passions that ruin me!

[37-a] At present I am so apathetic and cold of heart that I am unable to recollect my spirit or turn to You to ask for some particular grace with a faith strong enough to obtain what I desire. The more I think about you, my Jesus, the more temptations assail me! Oh, I am indeed miserable... tormented by my thirst and unable to reach the fount. Have pity on me, O Lord of the universe. Do not let me yield to temptation. I am almost drowning... You, O Lord, be the rock of my salvation.

Mary, Mother of all Christians, intercede for the salvation of this poor soul that has been banished by your dearly beloved Son. My Angel Guardian, be always on hand to help me, together with my holy patrons, St. John, St. Joseph, St. Francis, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Aloysius, St. Teresa and St. Francis de Sales... intercede for me that I may not perish forever. Pray too for my parents and friends, my benefactors and my enemies. Pray for the whole Christian world! So be it.

March 4, 1835

My temptation lasted from the time I awoke until this evening and it was a trifle stronger than usual. My God, do not let this despair of mine continue... it could lead me to suicide. This faintheartedness and lack of faith is frightening! Any thought of God, of Jesus and His redemption seems ridiculous... the promise that God hears our prayers seems an empty delusion... the prospect of a happier life in God's love fades away into the mist. I feel extreme distaste for any-

thing that smacks of piety or devotion. Recalling the Blessed Virgin, the holy Angels and Patron Saints has no effect at all on a miserable heart bereft of God's grace. Ignorant of the remedy for this evil, it must endure a frightful apathy and languor. The faint spark of hope and encouragement from one's reason serves only to induce one to try to attain some degree of natural virtue, if but to preserve the slim thread of a more Christian hope.

[37-b] The worst of this trial seems to have passed what with my performing my duties more conscientiously. However, in its place now I feel considerable aridity and indifference. The bitterness and chagrin I experience from the Prefect's dislike and disregard make me fear that my pride is emerging again. Dear God, help me to preserve the little humility I have. That is all I have to protect me from my enemy. My devotion to the Blessed Mother and the holy Angels and Patrons is nigh spent. It is hard even to turn my thoughts to heaven and God. How I wish this temptation had run its course! Or is it not a question of temptations but rather of the onset of my eternal punishment? O gentle Savior, it was Your love for us that impelled You to descend from Heaven to free us from hell. Be merciful to me. Grant that my faith and trust in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be genuine! Forgive my doubts... You have withdrawn from me the grace need to believe in Your mysteries. How I wish I could pray and shed tears of gratitude, of penance and love! But my heart is so parched and dry that it produces but worthless dust that swirls about aimlessly.

My heavenly Father, I yearn to kiss the cross of my Divine Master. Maybe He will hear my cry. I shall turn to Him with all my heart to beg Him never to leave me again forever. All you Blessed Spirits, pray for me. Lord Jesus, have pity on me.

It was announced today that our beloved emperor, Francis I, is dead. Be merciful to him, O Lord! So be it.

March 5, 1835

Dear Father of mine, I have been happier today than I was yesterday or over the past few days. That temptation eased off although a certain culpable coldness of heart has kept me from making further progress in my love for You. Most loving Lord, do forgive the faults I committed during those recent temptations. My God, You well know how utterly stiffnecked I am. Try to overlook my lack of trust and my excessive faintheartedness. [37-c] Once again I place

myself entirely in Your hands. I wish to love only You and no one else. Because it is Your will, I want to embrace my own wretchedness so that Your infinite glory may shine forth all the more. I shall bear every slight and adversity graciously, patiently and in full conformity with Your will. God the Holy Spirit, through the light of Your grace I can appreciate the incalculable heinousness of my sins. Would that I had never offended You who have created and redeemed me... You who wish only to make me truly holy! My divine Master, I have such a strong desire to talk with You, to lay before You my every thought and feeling! And how I long to hear Your comforting voice! But my Jesus, I languish still in my sins... I do not deserve to call myself a Christian. Nevertheless I do trust in You, sweet Jesus, for You have aided me in the performance of my duties and You will save me after this life of woe and sin.

Today was the first time I visited Madam Klar's house⁸⁹. She welcomed me like a mother, so saintly and kind. Deign to bless her, Lord! She showed me autographs of the Empress Caroline Augusta and of the good Emperor Francis who has just died in the Lord.

Dearest Mother Mary, full of grace, to thank you for your help during my temptations I promise to honor you by mortifying my desires. These I would stifle to restore peace to my soul so distraught during prayer. To you, my Guardian Angel, I offer my resolution to make an act of love to God at least every half-hour. And to you, St. John, my holy patron, I promise to accept patiently whatever affliction comes into my life whether of an earthly or a spiritual sort... any evil, any contempt or insult! Dear St. Francis Xavier, to you I dedicate the offering of myself to God which I shall renew each hour.

To honor you, St. Joseph, and to obtain your help I shall recite the Hail Mary every half-hour. St. Francis de Sales, to prove myself to be your obedient pupil, I shall make a spiritual communion twice a day... at Mass and before dinner. Pray for me all you Saints... pray also for my parents and friends, for my enemies and for the whole Catholic Church. So be it.

[38] At Prague, March 6, 1835

I was more devout today though I must say that towards evening I did not keep yesterday's resolutions quite as carefully as I

⁸⁹ The wife of Prof. Aloysius Klar. See note 73 of the *Journal, Spic. Hist.* 26 (1978) 1, p. 31.

should have. Nor did I check immediately the feeling of bitterness towards the prefect who read out the list of our faults. Thoughts against purity cause me considerable pain; however, God has been gracious enough to help me. I was overapprehensive about my catechetical instruction. I lacked confidence and proper resignation to God's will. Continuous recollection and affections are good for the soul and so I would like to pursue them with greater assiduity and fervor, However, I cannot do so during class at school.

Forgive me, divine Master, if I have sinned against the inspiration You gave me yesterday. Receive my prayer now and grant me all the graces I would have received had I followed up those impulses of devotion. The theological student Croix had the misfortune to fail in the presentation of his catechetical instruction. Dear God, do with me what You will... but be kind to me!

O most holy Teacher of mine, Jesus Christ, You have created me to be a saint; You have given me whatever grace I need and I have been so ungrateful and wretched as to squander that grace so recklessly. By the countless sins I have committed I have heaped opprobrium on You. Nonetheless You summon me to come to You. O divine Master, I desire most ardently to remain with You always, to live according to Your commandments,... at least so it seems to me... in Your mercy do not cast me off again. Enlighten and strengthen my faith, bolster my hope and enkindle ever more intensely within my heart Your divine love so that I may conceive true sorrow for my sins.

I beseech all you blessed spirits to obtain for me the grace of true contrition for my sins. Tomorrow above all else I hope to stir up within my heart the firm resolve to please God in this way. St Ignatius Loyola, guide me in my efforts to do so. Pray for me. So be it.

[38-a] March 7, 1835

Dear Savior, I am returning to You in sorrow because I was distracted almost all day from keeping the promises I made yesterday to promote Your glory. With Your help I did mortify myself on one occasion but a little later I yielded to the very same temptation when a slight drowsiness came upon me. I indulged myself unduly in spending six sous for fruit. Ah! I certainly disregarded Your inspiration, which was the wrong thing to do if I really feel that a bit of hunger will help me to concentrate better on the preparation of my catechetical instruction.

So I have sinned again through my lack of trust. Nor did I fulfill my promise of offering to the Blessed Mother any improper desire I might conceive. That lapse has left me quite upset... all of which just proves to me that my conceit is still strong. My God, this drowsiness that stems from physical inactivity distracts me constantly. It spawns slothful desires and leads this spirit of mine, so closely bound to the flesh, to yield without sufficient reflection. In the future I intend to try to overcome the drowsiness by changing my position or my occupation. I trust You will hear my prayer and strengthen me.

Alas! in my negligence I have sinned against the whole court of Heaven... against You, my God, by failing to keep the resolutions You inspired me to make; against you, my heavenly Mother Mary, in failing to offer you those unruly desires I had; against you, my Angel Guardian, in disregarding your inspiration to hearken to the Lord's voice as He was surely speaking to me. Forgive me, Lord! I have nothing to offer You to compensate for that disgraceful sin. Restore the grace I lost for my love has indeed grown cold.

My one desire is to progress each day towards the perfection to which You have called me. Just grant me Your favor once more, my divine Master. Would that that were the last sin I should ever commit! Be gracious to me, Lord! [38-b] Tomorrow I hope to keep my resolutions with the sort of exactitude that will prove the sincerity of my conversion, even though that may be quite imperfect due to the fact that I do not have a contrition to match the heinousness of my sins.

Dear Mother Mary, dare I ask for your help again? Ah! have pity on my weakness. I promise to try never again to offend you so shamefully. My God, through my Guardian Angel I thank You for the grace You have given me to devote myself so thoroughly to my studies. Bless all of them, dear Lord. Without Your help I could not even draw a single breath and so all that I do should redound to Your glory.

My holy patrons, I disregarded the good example you have left me... I ignored the aid proffered through your brotherly prayers for me. Oh, I am most ungrateful. Forgive me, intercede for me once again, for my parents, my friends, my benefactors and my enemies. So be it.

March 9, 1835

I had to finish my catechetical instruction yesterday and so I kept writing all night until 3:30 a.m. That made it impossible, dear Lord, to think of You as often as I would have liked to do. Still today when I did not have so much to do, I hardly gave You a thought! I received a letter from my parents yesterday telling me of the death of the elder Böhm and of Peter Coidl (?)⁹⁰. Be gracious to them, O Lord!

During these days I am trying especially to mortify my desires which occasionally are quite inordinate. I do not always succeed in this. My God, my will does not yet coincide with Yours; my trust in Your providence is still weak; nor do I yet possess the kind of childlike confidence I should have. Forgive these departures from the way of salvation... especially my carelessness with regard to my health. [38-c] Tomorrow I intend to renew all my good resolutions and to try to develop a liking for the duties of my vocation.

St. Joseph, you who were so conscientious about providing for the physical health of my Lord, please intercede for me that I may find joy in the performance of my duties, so that someday I may know how to provide for the Christian souls God may confide to my care. Beloved foster-father of Jesus, your intercession has got to be all-powerful. St. Teresa says she never failed to receive whatever she asked of you! It is true, I do not deserve an answer to my prayers but that is precisely why I turn to you because your holiness will make my lowly prayers acceptable to our Lord. Pray then for me that I may not be so careless in performing my duties. Holy Mary, mother of my God, ask your Son to give me His love. All you blessed spirits, pray for me. So be it.

March 10, 1835

Merciful Lord, even though I broke my resolutions and disregarded Your inspirations, I still dare to call You my beloved Master. Today in *Philothea*⁹¹ I read that haste in the performance of works of devotion is reprehensible. Therefore I now intend to make my

⁹⁰ Two men from Neumann's hometown of Prachatitz. The names do not appear elsewhere in the *Journal* or the letters or biographies of Neumann.

⁹¹ *Philothea or An Introduction to a Devout Life*, by Francis de Sales. Neumann's reference is probably to Pt. III, Chap. 10: «Against Anxiety and Solitude».

spiritual communion just once a day at Holy Mass. Every hour I shall make an offering of myself to You. Sweet Jesus, this change is easier on me. Is it agreeable to You? I want to do Your will for mine is most sinful in every way. Ah! I am still so frail and lukewarm that I can go for hours without even giving a thought to You who alone can preserve me from sin.

To overcome my aloofness towards the Prefect, it occurred to me today that perhaps I could make my confession to him at least once. If such should be Your will, dear Jesus, it is up to You to provide the opportunity for me to do so. Have pity on my poor weak soul. May Your will be accomplished in me! Command what You will... I wish but to obey!

Today I was rather sluggish [39] in the fulfilment of my duties despite Your kind inspirations. Accept my desire, howsoever faint, to have avoided all sin, in lieu of proper sorrow. It seems as though my pigheadedness and conceit will not yet permit me to be truly sorry for my sins. I have but one request, my Lord, ... teach me to conduct myself graciously in acquiring the art of conversation. I am utterly inept at that. Whatever temptations may befall me, do not let me yield to them. My conscience is already rather delicate; I have a dread of lying and gossip. Tell me how I can avoid them. O most holy and wise God, guide my tongue. If it should be Your will to send me among men, help me to win their affection. Still, if that be not in accord with Your wishes, I will endure patiently the shame my awkwardness brings upon me. Strengthen my patience, Lord!

Mary, heavenly Mother, I thank you for your powerful aid in mortifying my more unruly desires. O may my sacrifice be as complete as possible in order to please my God! Pray for me always, dearest Mother, and overlook the boldness with which I address you. Ask your beloved Son to lead me no more into temptation to my faith, for it upsets me exceedingly. My holy Guardian Angel, guard my every step, help me to recognize the dangers I incur because of my indifference and apathy.

My holy patrons, intercede for me that the ardor and zeal of my devotion may not slacken but rather grow steadily and bear worthy fruit. My friends seem to have forgotten me. May Your name be blessed, O Lord. Dear God, protect my friends, my beloved parents, my benefactors ... keep them and all Christians in Your sanctifying grace. Holy Spirit, descend upon me! So be it.

[39-a] March 11, 1835

Today I was more lax than usual; although I followed most of the inspirations I received, I did yield somewhat to sloth. Sometimes too I forgot to make the hourly offering of myself to God as I had determined to do. Those temptations to impurity were quite violent but God's grace vanquished them. I felt considerable distaste for the performance of my duties and I am afraid I slipped back into my old weakness. Dear God, help me! My Jesus, I have too little confidence in You... that is why I fall. Give me a faith that is strong and impervious to these miserable attacks.

Heavenly Father, is it disrespectful of me to speak to You in this fashion? You are my Sovereign Lord, my Creator, the All-holy One... and I, what am I? a great sinner who has constantly offended You despite all my resolutions. I honestly believe that I want to keep Your commandments but my desire is useless because deep down inside, all I want are sensible comforts and joy. They seem to be the focus of all my prayers. I must confess, dear Jesus, that I do not really love You... but I want to love You with all my heart and to show my love to all the world. But how am I to go about achieving this? My hearts is empty... empty of all love, sorrow or complete offering of myself. O, would that I could suffer with You, my crucified Master! Just see how foolish I am... I ask for sufferings that I don't have and I refuse to accept those You send me!

Beloved Master, if You have determined that I should endure scorn for the rest of my life, if I am meant to be a useless drag on the human race, an inveterate sinner on the face of this earth, then my Jesus, do be kind and merciful to me! Mary, Mother of God, fully persuaded of my worthlessness I turn to you. Teach me, Mirror of justice, to be virtuous so that my God will accept my useless desires in place of the deeds I ought to offer Him. My Guardian Angel, do not forsake me because of my disobedience to the Lord you love so well... He is also my Lord! All my holy patrons, protect me. Pray for my parents and friends. So be it.

[39-b] March 12, 1835

This has been a thoroughly wretched day. The laity I felt yesterday has lasted until now together with a complete lack of trust and a terrible temptation to faith. The fact that I have prayed so much

without either spiritual or temporal results has filled me with frightful doubts. The mediocre fruits of my efforts in class, my inability to correct my faults, the welter of dashed hopes, the humiliations I experience in conversation with anyone and which make it difficult to deal with them, the contempt I receive from the Prefect and the decent folk here, and especially the scant prospect of improvement in the future make me well nigh despondent. O Supreme Being Whom we call God, is it possible that I have the wrong religion? Surely our religion is the best there is. Why then do You not hearken to my plea? The faint spark of hope and bit of faith from my better days is almost gone... if they haven't disappeared already! What shall I do when faith, hope and love are lost? I admit to You, my God, my sins are limitless... I was born to be a sinner... I am more familiar with evil than with good. Doesn't Baptism give us Your grace? I have never been content with myself, never entirely at ease. I had barely overcome the sins of my youth and found some hope in the practice of virtue... I hoped for Your grace and You did grant it to me... but now the fount of Your mercy has dried up for me. I am sick in body and soul; my friends scorn and avoid me, as do all the decent people... and there seems to be no prospect of a change for the better! What are these tears I am shedding but badges of the grief I suffer over my abandonment? To whom should I turn now? God has shown His wrath by depriving me of the graces I need to become truly holy because of my sins and lack of sorrow.

[39-c]. My soul, what are you going to do now? Your Savior has forsaken you, perhaps forever... on account of your stubbornness and malice you have lost whatever merit you had... though you continue to knock on heaven's door, it will never open for you because your sins have locked it shut. O wretched the day I was born! Your God loved you then and you have forsaken Him so now He leaves you all alone in the world. You shall have no more friends to comfort you for you have offended everyone.

Lord Jesus Christ, You have abandoned me as I deserved but I shall not therefore be induced to violate the commandments so dear to those who love You. I shall do all I can to obey them since disobedience would only make me all the more wretched. Oh death! How I wish your moment would come even though it frightens me... at least it would mean the end of this miserable existence. I really would welcome you! O God, my Judge, be gracious to me! So be it.

March 13, 1835

Briefly through the day I felt touched by God's grace. I was happy and entertained pleasant hopes for the future. However I had to spend most of my time working on the catechetical instruction. The man listed to speak ahead of me, Siha (?), one of the students from the Fathers of Mercy, took sick and so my turn was advanced. That left me little time to memorize the speech and I am worried that I won't be able to deliver it without faltering. O my God, give me the grace of faith and trust in You and I will endure any disgrace gladly. Dear God, if this anxiety of mine is just a temptation, do not let me yield to it.

Occasionally glimmers of faith and hope comfort my soul for a while but they soon vanish and then I fear that I am once again deceived about this. My God, do not deny me the grace of a solid faith and I shall sing Your praises forever! Help me to understand the joys and consolations of our faith and my heart and tongue will praise and glorify You through all eternity! O Lord God, do not scorn my humble prayers... I am being crushed under the weight of these adversities and misfortunes of body and soul! Please hearken to my cry!

[40] March 14, 1835

I thank You with all my heart, my Lord, for having spared me any great disgrace today. I finished the instruction without faltering even though I was fairly nervous. O my God, You did answer the prayers I said yesterday, didn't You! Would that I could always pray with all the confidence I need to glorify You and to unite myself more closely to You through the consideration of Your immense goodness. Indeed, how painful it is to lose the grace of faith!

Dear Father, today You forgave my sins through the sacrament of Penance. Though I was not overdisturbed at having offended You by my unruly behavior and my scant resistance to temptations to faith, still I trust that You have cleansed me of every stain of sin. Sweet Jesus, prove to me by inspiring me to a truly devout life that my resolution was indeed sincere and that You accept me as Your child. I entreat You from the bottom of my heart, do not deprive me of the gift of faith for such a loss could doom me forever. Heavenly Father, to make myself worthy of such a grace I now renew my resolution to offer myself to You hourly. I also intend to make a spiritual

communion twice a day and to observe a rigorous fast during Lent.

Beloved Master, will You deign to help me in my plan to meditate on Your passion and death? Enlighten my mind, move my heart, strengthen my will that I may sing Your praises forever. Tomorrow You will come to visit me, my Lord. I wish that I could receive You with a heart that truly loves You and desires You alone. However, I am full of sin!

Holy Mary, cleanse me that your Son may find a warm and pleasant dwelling in my heart. Angel Guardian, You who have guided and protected me, [40-a] ...may the good Lord reward You for it... I have nothing to offer you. Pray for this poor sinner. My holy patrons, during that bitter struggle I had, I seldom thought of you, and then only with little affection. Do forgive me! When my faith is stronger... for it is still somewhat weak... when I have greater trust and love, I will approach you more often. For now I can only yearn for such a blessing. Pray for me, my parents and friends, my enemies and all Christians living and dead. So be it.

March 15, 1835

O my God! That frightful situation has come upon me again. Divine Master, why have You forsaken me? Tell me what sin I have committed, what precisely is it that evokes this punishment from You? Is it my fate to continue to be assailed with doubts, mistrust and misery? Please keep me from falling into utter despair. My prayers comfort me no more because of my lack of confidence; and You, dear Lord, pay no heed to them because of my unworthiness. O, I am so wretched as to stand in need of so many things both spiritual and physical! If only my faith were solid I would be grateful for all my sufferings. Instead, impatience, lack of courage and reliability pervade my whole life. Would that I could die to put an end to these agonizing doubts! Yes, in all truth I do wish to die! My Father, if You are still my Father, if You still feel some pity for this poor sinner, hear my prayers!

Alas! I pray constantly, I pray with zeal and fervor but there seems to be no ear to hearken to my prayers. Moreover, the faint glimmer of faith that appears occasionally in my heart and persuades me to pray is surely to be smothered by the vain desires that at the time seem so reasonable to me. My Father, is it what I ask for that hinders You from answering my prayers? You inspire me as to what

I should pray for in accord with Your infinite holiness. Then hear me and my heart shall swell with confidence, trust and love.

Today I fasted more strictly than usual. My God, [40-b] deign to accept this offering of mine... full of pride and self-interest as it is... as a pledge of my sincerity in wanting to do penance for my sins. Dear Jesus, I seldom think of You... at least less often than I promised to do because when I start to think of You those doubts return to torment me. Lord, do not allow me to be deceived concerning the basic principles.

Am I some sort of fanatic or rather, simply too lax? Enlighten me, Lord, and give me strength. My Jesus, come to visit me again. I still have that desire... but I wonder if it will last. I made my holy communion today with no great fervor. Forgive me, Lord, my faithlessness, my coldness and self-centeredness. My friends seem to have fled me for it's been all of three months since I have received a letter from Schmid. I did offer my yearning for a letter to our Blessed Mother.

Apparently the Dean no longer wishes to communicate with me... I suppose I strike him as lazy and unreliable. May You be forever blessed, my Jesus! Devout people scoff at me for my ineptitude; the others for my pretended strictness which they regard as shallow enthusiasm. I am deliberately repressing the tears that normally comfort me because I fear they may be a trick of Satan's. My prayers are filled with doubt and apathy because their main support, God's grace, has been taken from me. The Infant Jesus whom I love with but scant conformity to His will, no longer brings joy to my heart for I seem to have lost the filial affection I had for Him.

Divine Master, when I think about You I become more and more depressed. But because from the very beginning You have given me so many favors, I shall continue to throw myself at Your feet. Strike me, Lord, I well deserve it, but do not command me to leave You. Forgive my lack of faith and hope. Holy Mary, my Guardian Angel and all you saints, intercede for me the greatest of sinners. Pray too for my parents, my friends and my enemies. So be it.

March 16, 1835

Today I was less well-disposed than I was yesterday, particularly up until the time for the Requiem for the Emperor (at the Bishop's residence). Things began to get bad when I broke my fast

to eat some apples. During Holy Mass celebrated by the Archbishop God gave me a special sign by inspiring me to read a passage from *The Imitation of Christ*, 3 (or 8?), 9. I read the chapter once and my faith seemed to be [40-c] restored. Still, almost right away my doubts arose as to whether all this was but some sort of trick to keep me in the dark... at any rate that spoiled any benefit I might have drawn from it.

Dear God, unless You come to my aid swiftly, my sullen despondency will be my ruin. On the other hand I can detect another sign of Your kindness, Lord... I received a short letter from Schawel with the five florins from Schmid and one from good Schawel himself! Ah! their prayers must be much more effective than mine!

My soul, we would let the Messiah pass us by even though He has often been so gracious to us. We should be more independent⁹². No... only He can save us! Perhaps He will call us again. My soul, you well know your worthlessness without God's grace to sustain you. Oh, would that my faith were strong enough that I might never again wish I had never been born!

My resolution to turn my thoughts hourly to God and to offer myself to Him was not very well kept today because of my lack of faith. Can a prayer said without faith and through hypocrisy possibly be pleasing to the Lord. If I were certain that all my present anguish was but a temptation of the devil, I would be more at ease. However, my main difficulty is precisely that I am afraid I am wrong.

Every once in a while the sight of the treasured holy pictures in my room gives me some comfort... or is that too some sort of devilish trick? I can no longer seem to be able to concentrate, to focus on a particular tack... my whole effort is directed to dispelling my doubts and anxiety. My moral state is worsening... violent temptations to purity assail me; pride, hatred, anger and bitterness swirl about me. My resistance is quite weak. Nothing seems to cheer me since in my misery I have no hope of achieving happiness at all. Even the thought that You, O Lord, will come back to me gives me no joy since my desire to love and praise You seems not only useless but even harmful in that it may well be another trick! Such is my state, Divine Master... that I can no longer bring myself to love. Have pity on me. So be it.

⁹² This seems to refer to earlier plans which Neumann, Schmid and Schawel had made to go together to the foreign missions. Schmid and Schawel had now changed their minds. See *Journal* for Jan. 14, 1835.

[41] March 17, 1835

Today there was the matter of my being bad myself rather than assailed by temptation. I did not check my excessive appetite for food, I yielded to idleness and read some sonnets of Petrarch which may well have caused me to have impure thoughts.

I served as acolyte in the Archiepiscopal Church for the Emperor's funeral. Around the bier were two hundred and thirty candles, each weighing three pounds!

The temptation to faith is gone, Lord. Forgive me! I have sinned against You by my impatience and my sullenness. My faith is strong once again and I feel that I can begin once more to lead a truly spiritual life more in line with my Savior's commandments. Dear Jesus, I shall always love You but I beg You, do not withdraw Your grace from me. I have sinned so many times. If perhaps they were venial sins, pardon them, Lord, in view of my resolution now never again to permit any laxity in my life. Restore the grace which I have caused to be diminished through my sins. Yes, my Jesus, I bid You a fair welcome into my heart. Here it is... I offer it to You, O Jesus, in expiation of the many and intense sentiments of bitterness I felt during that horrid temptation. Without a doubt those sentiments left my heart defiled. Accept it now nonetheless and dispose it for every sort of worthy deed.

O dear Jesus, offended a thousand times and ever equally forgiving, abide with me! May Your holy name be praised forever! And may my heart be a worthy throne for the gentle spouse of my soul! Jesus, do not forsake me ever again. I shall try to fulfill my obligations in such a way that I will never drive You from my heart. Divine Master, forgive me for my failure to reap from that temptation all the fruit I should have reaped had I been duly patient. Do not be angry with me. I want to love You more but Your grace must work strongly within me.

My heavenly Mother, I do not know whether or not I am in the state of grace... do pray for this poor sinner! My holy [41-a] Guardian Angel, I often disregarded your orders... forgive this wickedness. My holy patrons whom I have offended by my laxity, overlook my unworthiness and help me once more to practice the virtues which endeared you to God. Pray for my parents, my friends and my enemies. So be it.

I heard today that R. P. Dichtl has been sick for several hours. Dear God, strengthen Your priest and my spiritual director. Inspire

our Emperor⁹³ with devout sentiments, since it is rumored that he has suppressed the cloister at Melk⁹⁴. So be it.

March 18, 1835

I have been rather lax today in as much as I failed to observe the fast and I was careless in the performance of my duties. I still have to prepare my sermon and yet I keep putting it off each day. However, I was more conscientious in keeping my resolution. Despite these misfortunes with Your help I intend to begin again tomorrow to live in a more Christian manner. Divine Master, I have been so ungrateful. Do not punish me by withdrawing Your grace from me. You can see, my Jesus, that my soul is still distraught ever since I had that temptation to faith. I feel a rather strong sensual love for You, my Jesus, while I realize You desire a more disinterested love. Grant me such a love! Would that I were like You... more perfect in virtue!

I believe it would be better for me to recall Your presence every half-hour in order to rekindle the fire of Your divine love which tends to cool if I neglect to think of You for so long as an hour. For some time now the fasting has become quite difficult... perhaps the pangs of hunger distract me in my studies. Nevertheless, I resolve [41-b] to fast until noon tomorrow. When my spiritual vigor wanes it makes trouble for me too. I can tell from day to day that I do actually benefit from the graces I receive to advance in perfection. My soul, let us not permit the days to slip by in which faith offers us genuine progress towards the goal of all virtuous people. And who has given you the assurance that this favorable situation is going to last for any great time?

Dear Jesus, the holy faith You offer us makes us so strong! Permit me to carry it to our poor fellowmen who do not yet know of it. Give me the ability I need to do this. Holy Mary, my heavenly Mother, pray for me who lacking proper sorrow for my sins has been so ungrateful to your divine Son. Ah! hear my plea and obtain true repentance for me. My Guardian Angel and all my holy patrons, especially you, St. John at whose tomb I prayed today with special de-

⁹³ Ferdinand I of Austria.

⁹⁴ Melk, a small town on the Danube, halfway between Linz and Vienna in Austria. Neumann's reference is to the ancient Benedictine monastery located in Melk. The rumor regarding its suppression seems to have been groundless.

votion, and you, St. Joseph whose feast we shall celebrate tomorrow, obtain for me the graces I need to be a priest. Pray too for my parents, my friends at Budweiss, and my benefactors. So be it.

March 19, 1835

Sweet Jesus, You have been so kind to me! I fulfilled my obligations, observed the fast and even though there were some interruptions, I was quite careful in keeping my resolution to recall Your presence every half-hour.

I served as acolyte for the Bishop's Mass at the Ursulines' chapel... as I have begun to visit the blind there (this is the second time). In the afternoon following our usual walk we recited the Office of the Dead for Francis the First. Madame Klar was telling me of her acquaintance with Fr. Dichtl and his sister, the Carmelite. It seems that Fr. Dichtl's sister saw those two Carmelite nuns who came to Gmund near Vienna to establish a new monastery a short while ago. Then the same nuns were in Bud-[41-c]weiss at the Bishop's residence and Fr. Dichtl was celebrating Mass for them. Afterwards he said to his own sister who happened to be learning how to sew there that those religious were going to find many hardships and sufferings in their path. The sister, who was already devoted to the practice of virtue, thereupon conceived a great desire to join the Order.

Her brother, to test her vocation, suggested she forget her desire. In time, however, he yielded to her pleas and took her to Prague where they knew no one at all. The Superioress of the Carmelites suggested that the young lady should have a surrogate mother and therefore persuaded Fr. Dichtl to approach Professor Klar. That good man was delighted to come upon two such devout souls and he recommended them to his virtuous wife. Madame Klar then offered a place to the young lady who is now Sr. Teresa.

My God, You have surely been good to me in letting me know these people whom You so love! Madame Klar scrubs the floors in the Institute for the Blind all by herself. She cooks for the residents too. What splendid humility! I, dear God, am ashamed of my considerable imperfection. My divine Father and my Master, Jesus, help me to advance in those virtues that will make me worthy of such outstanding acquaintances. Reward Fr. Dichtl who is the cause of it all... and my friend Schmid who introduced me to Fr. Dichtl. These

folks with souls as pure as the Angels worship You on their knees on the cold stone floor. And I, such a great sinner, what do I do? I blush to say it!! Ah! Lord, I am indeed so ungrateful. Cast Your eye upon me, my God, and send Your grace to me that I may seek to be perfect so that I may know how to lead others to You the source of all goodness. St. Joseph, it must have been your intercession that won for me such delightful graces. Poor sinner that I am, how can I properly thank you? Ah! pray to my Jesus that He may grant me His love which taught you so many virtues. O Jesus, be gracious to me! So be it.
a lie.⁹⁵

[42] March 20, 1835

It was an unusual joy for me to experience such a high degree of fervor during the early hours of this morning and even up until noon! The resolutions I had made yesterday I fulfilled with all possible care because, my Jesus, Your grace was with me. The list of books the Dean has sent me is giving me quite some trouble. He wants the volume by Hauber and also St. Bernard's *Way to Heaven* and the first volume of Allioli's work on the Scriptures. After class I went to the bookstore of Mr. Haase... but that first volume (of Allioli) has not yet arrived. I bought the first two books. Help me, my God, to send them off tomorrow without subterfuge or sin.⁹⁶ The thought that I still do not have my sermon written disturbs me no little.

Then too, especially towards evening, I feel the first stirrings of my old temptations, i. e., the lack of courage, of faith and trust. I love You, O my Jesus, for even in punishing me You show Your love for me. Still I beg You to hear my cry... do not let me fall into that despondency again. But if it is Your will to send this punishment to me, I shall endure it patiently. How I wish my heart were on

⁹⁵ This single word (mensogne) in Neumann's handwriting appears beneath the last line of p. 41-c of the original *Journal*. He may have jotted it there as a reminder for eventual confession or, possibly, for elaboration in the next day's entry. At any rate, he seems to have forgotten about it subsequently since there is no further mention of the matter.

⁹⁶ Neumann here refers to the difficulty he anticipated in getting permission to leave the seminary in order to mail the books to the Dean. In general, permission was necessary for students to leave the seminary grounds. However on at least one previous occasion Neumann had no problem in sending books to the Dean. See *Journal* for Nov. 4, 1834 (he received permission easily!) and Mar. 25, 1835, also Zschokke, *op. cit.*, p. 841.

fire with Your love, my Jesus! I do not deserve for You to come to me but the thought of being separated from You is worse than that of my being such a great sinner. Do not spurn me then... come to dwell in my heart; cleanse it of every stain. I regret my inability to show You the fervor of my love... O make it more efficacious, my Lord! Take pity on my frailty. You can see how much I want to please You, yet I disregard Your inspirations, even those I recognize more clearly.

Divine Master, come to my aid that I may not be deceived. I fear nothing but the possibility of losing You forever. Would that I had the same interest in practicing virtue that I showed in offending You! My God, I gladly promise You that I will never leave [32-a] You again. Still, I am so weak that I no longer really know myself. May you deign to grant me the strength I need! But will I cooperate with that grace? Forgive me, all-powerful God. O Queen of Angels, protect me. You have shown me very special favor and I am most grateful, dear Mother. Be always with me especially at the hour of my death. My holy Guardian Angel, keep me from all sin tomorrow. Holy patrons of mine, make me like you so that with you I may give glory to our heavenly Father. Pray also for all those for whom I am committed to pray... for my parents, my friends, R. P. Dichtl and M. Klar and all devout people everywhere. Be merciful to all Christians on this earth! So be it.

March 21, 1835

Help me, divine Master! In my heart I fear once again the despair that is so likely to follow the misfortunes that have come upon me. Right down until noon today I endured the whole gamut of pain and suffering... aridity of soul, hunger, shame and aversion to all the various spiritual exercises. I made a strenuous effort to submit to Your holy will.

I brought the Dean's books to the postman, Koch, but I could not find him so I had to leave the books with a lady who sells fruit nearby. She still owes me one florin, twenty shillings. I asked her to obtain that amount from the postman and she said she would have the money by afternoon. However I was not able to go out because none of the superiors was home. I did go out anyway after the instruction on the Psalms but the woman was gone. I left without permission and my conscience bothers me... I ought not to have done that! But

I have extremely little money and it could well be that I have now lost those 1 fl., 20 sh.

My Jesus, will these afflictions You have deigned to send me last for a long time yet? I once asked You to [42-b] send me suffering Yourself rather than impose them on myself. Is this then Your answer to my prayer? O, then, I do thank You! My Jesus, You can see the pain I have endured all day. I ask You to add this offering of my total resignation to Your holy will. Come to my aid should the thought that You never answer my prayers assail my weak faith or threaten to destroy my health. Forgive me... with these tears⁹⁷ I am just trying to relieve the pain in my heart.

Teach me, my heavenly Master, Jesus Christ, when I ought to pray for things of this world, because sometimes it seems to me that I fail in this matter. Teach me also the right way to pray so that for once at least I may have the joy of knowing You have heard my prayers. Sweet Jesus, why is it that You disdain to answer my prayers? O, I do thank You for this exquisite pain! Forgive me for taking such pleasure in my grief; in the tears that flow down my cheeks. My frailty seeks comfort for my afflictions, my desolation and lack of trust... though I have certainly deserved these many times. Take pity on this miserable sinner, my Jesus, ... my conversion seems to be a matter merely of empty promises. When it comes to fulfilling them the only motive that impels me is the fear that afterwards my conscience would bother me if I failed to keep them.

When shall I be fortunate enough to love You with a truly pure heart and to obey Your laws simply because they are the will of my heavenly Father? How I wish I had never rejected Your grace! Be gracious to me, Lord. Through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, of my Guardian Angel, my holy patrons and all the Blessed in Heaven, grant me true sorrow for my sins. Pray too for my parents, my friends and my enemies. So be it.

March, 22, 1835

My fervor today has been rather slight because of [42-c] the dryness of spirit that afflicted me all day. Still, my will, howsoever weak, remained conformed to God's will. I frequently made an act

⁹⁷ The ms. here contains several blotches.

of resignation and that seemed to calm my soul. Yet I have to admit I was rather tepid and lax and occasionally my afflictions depressed me so much I began to lose confidence.

I propose to try to overcome the bitterness I feel towards the Prefect for he is without doubt a worthy man. Since I am rather proud and ambitious I am often offended by his apparent dislike of me, although I well deserve that the whole world despise me for my many sins against my God. My homework, i. e., the sermon I have to prepare, is giving me a lot of trouble... still, I thank You for that, my Lord. At present I seem to be able to endure my sufferings with greater patience since I have come to consider them as punishments from my Father who sends them to me in place of the external penances I may not attempt without a stricter confessor.

My Jesus, I beg You with all my heart, prove to me, please, by a clear victory over my evil inclinations, that it is indeed Your grace that works within me... that I am not just striving futilely through some trick of Satan who would lull me to persist in my unmortified vices. O Divine Master, grant me Your love which will help me carry my cross which I do wish to bear in order to be Your disciple. Ah, my Lord, what joy it would bring me to be able to kiss the Cross and to hold it fast in my arms day and night! For You have sanctified that Cross with the precious blood You have shed for my sins!

The more I reflect on what I ought to do in order to be able to say that I am following Your example, dear Lord, the more clearly I recognize my great tepidity, my selflove and my sensuality. My God, my conversion seems to be entirely external since I still long for consolations, for blessings and pleasure. Have pity on this poor sinner! Through the intercession of the holy Virgin Mary, of my Guardian Angel and all the Saints in heaven and on earth, cleanse me of all my sins. So be it.

[43] Prague, March 23, 1835

In general I was better disposed today, and more fervent and mortified than usual. My faith was quite strong and God's love made me happier than ever. Still, I was rather lax in recalling the presence of God and in my prayers, I was consistently distracted. My aversion to classwork still bothers me and I do not try very hard to overcome this. However I do not intend to yield to it. Trying to check my unruly desires was not too difficult today... and I appreciated that change!

My beloved Jesus, help me overcome my repugnance for classwork... that feeling looms over me all day and threatens to undo me at every moment.

I drew considerable edification from reading the life of St. Joseph Calasanctius. It gave me new strength. St. Joseph Calasanctius, you pray for me too! For some days now I have noticed that a new sort of dryness of heart has come over me... it produces an unusually sharp aversion to exercises of devotion. I still frequently recall the presence of my Lord... and with a sense of humility... but such thoughts remain at a very ordinary level. They do not stir me as profoundly as when I am enjoying God's consolations and comfort.

Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of my soul, show me the path I must yet follow if I am to reach perfection. Doubtlessly, meditation is a most apposite means of achieving perfection... but am I not deceiving myself when I say I can't find a suitable time for it? Lord, if it be Your will that I should meditate, then let me perceive this and I shall do so forthwith. Dear Jesus, my worldly affairs are not prospering at all... but Your holy will be done! Merely preserve me from mortal sin and enable me to avoid venial sin since that diminishes Your love. I want to do all I can to fulfill my obligations conscientiously to show You that I do indeed wish to dispose myself for Your love.

[43-a] I seem to be less devoted to the Saints than I usually am... my God, whence do You suppose that comes from? Is it something I have done? Heavenly Mother Mary, intercede for me... and you, my Guardian Angel and my holy patrons, pray that I may recoup my wonted fervor in your regard. Pray also for my parents, my friends and benefactors and the whole Christian world. So be it.

March 24, 1835.

My Jesus, the distraction I experience at prayer. my careless speech as well as my frequent departures from the truth all go to prove to me that I have strayed away from You! Ah! Good Shepherd... seek out this soul that has wandered off and is sinking in the swamp of sin. Gentle Master, I trust more firmly than ever that You will lead me back within the fold of the spiritual life. You have treated me with great affection, dear Jesus, and You have shown this by the sufferings You have sent me and by answering my prayers for a more constant faith. Yesterday I asked the Blessed Mother to obtain for me from God that I get my English grammar back from the bindery.

It seemed to me that I prayed, by Her inspiration, with extraordinary confidence and faith... and today I did recover my book!

How shall I thank You, my God and most kind Father? Ah! I am so poor! Lord Jesus, do with me what You will... I wish to place myself entirely in Your hands for in myself I find only sin, evil inclinations, ill-mortified passions, tepidity and aversion. Unless You, dear Jesus, give me something, I shall only become ever poorer. My Savior, would that I could offer You a sacrifice that would please You! Accept this poor sinner as Your disciple. Command and I shall obey... tell me to go and I shall go, if it should so please Your justice and Your holiness... even if it should be Your will that I be worthy to shed my blood to give witness to Your beloved Spouse the Church... I am ready to do so.

[43-b] Ah! my God, forgive this foolishness of mine, but I shall never be quite as ready to die as right now! Still, You well know my readiness of heart and my frailty... help me! Teach me to know Your will. My most ardent desire is to know You better, to make You known to others, to love You and make You loved by others! O all-powerful and infinitely kind God, accomplish this in me. Holy Mother Mary, tomorrow we are going to celebrate the feast of your Annunciation. Help me by your intercession to pass the entire day devoutly and sinlessly. Holy Guardian Angel, inspire me to recall the presence of my Jesus at every moment in which that danger to my faith occurs. My holy patrons, intercede for me that I too may share those virtues that won heaven for you. Pray for me and my parents and friends, my enemies and benefactors and the whole Christian world. So be it.

March 25, 1835

My most beloved Jesus, how can I properly thank You for the kindness You have shown me today in letting me recover my change from Mr. Koch, the postman. I really thought I would never see it again. How admirable Your concern for us mortals! I wanted to attend the Benediction of Abbot Zeidler and to hear our Prefect preach but I could not go out without explicit permission... and besides, the work on my sermon was more urgent.

However, dear Jesus, You did comfort me... I stayed home and did what I had to do. Blessed Mother Mary, it was doubtlessly through your powerful intercession that I received so many graces. How can I ever thank you enough for taking pity on me, a poor sinner? I

deeply grieve that I did not come to know you earlier in my life... that I have in my ingratitude so often resisted the many and great graces received through your intercession. However, Divine Master, in the future I shall never again leave you; I shall remain [43-c] Your servant always! Do not reject me as I deserve. I know now that You are gracious to all especially to sinners of which I am the greatest. My Lord, since You have allowed me to experience such consolations in my prayers and devotions, I trust You will never punish me again by withdrawing from me. I trust further that You will help me to profit from those consolations in accord with Your will. I stand in need of a number of things... what should I do to deserve to receive at least some of them? It is You who have planned that I be poorly endowed... do not be angry with me then that I have nothing worthwhile to offer You. Were my soul and body more suited to promote Your glory, I would offer them to You with all my heart. At any rate, accept the gift of my resignation to Your will... even though it may be just words on my part... accept it in Your Kindness. You have showered me with Your grace, my God, to enable me to perceive my unworthiness. Ah! Divine Master, be my master indeed! Teach me Your kind of humility which I so thoroughly lack. Purify my heart of all sin and fill it with Your love. Teach me to conform my will to Yours with all the generosity You desire of me.

My dearest Mother Mary, through the boundless grace you received when the angel came to announce to you that God had chosen you, blessed among womankind, to be the Mother of Christ, obtain for me the graces I need during my life and especially at the hour of my death.

My holy Guardian Angel, lay these fervent desires of mine before God's throne so that He may fulfill them. My holy patron, St. John; my faithful advocate, St. Joseph; my exemplar, St. Francis Xavier; my mentor, St. Francis de Sales; St. Joseph Calasanctius and all you Saints, pray for me, a poor sinner. Pray too for my parents, my enemies and my friends, benefactors and all Christians. So be it.

[44] Prague, March 26, 1835

Strangely enough today I felt a renewed sense of resignation to God's will... but it seemed to spawn a kind of carelessness in my general behavior. Was it perhaps that I forgot my problem⁹⁸ for a

⁹⁸ Neumann here seems to refer to the difficulties he experienced in meeting the Dean's requests for books.

while or was it simply a lack of fervor on my part. Whatever it was, in the future I resolve to stir up sentiments of contrition several times a day and then to make an act of resignation to God's will. My heavenly Master, teach me to know my sins more clearly my bad habits, their cause etc., and show me the best remedies for these ills. Ah! my soul, now that you have a stronger sense of faith and trust in God, you must be more conscientious in the pursuit of virtue because if He should so will to withdraw His grace, all your progress in virtue will come to a halt. Try to develop a selfless love for Him... a love that includes complete resignation to His will. Then God will take pity on us and embrace us as a loving father caresses his child who wandered off and got lost and now was found again.

O my sweet Jesus, I thank You for the frequent consolations You send me. However, I do fear that my ingratitude and sloth may cause You to abandon me. I make bold to pray for Your infinite mercy and Your patience. Never leave me, my Savior... no one else in the whole world could save me! Forgive the sins I have committed and give me the grace never again to commit a mortal sin. Keep me also from committing venial sin for that offends the Holy Spirit who deigns to dwell within my soul.

Holy Mary, dearest Mother of mine, pray for this poor sinner that your Son may grant me whatever grace I need to be a proper minister of the Church. Pray too, I beg you, that I may solve my problem with the Dean and with the volume of Canisius. May the Lord bless this difficulty, if He so will! His will be done always! My holy Guardian Angel and my holy patrons, obtain for me the grace to continue faithfully in the pursuit of holiness. So be it.

Today I visited again the institute for the blind. They wept upon hearing the story of Tobias!

[44-a] March 27, 1835

I was upset almost all day without any special reason. Occasionally temptations to faith assailed me but I succeeded in overcoming them. The uncertainty of my relationship with the Prefect bothers me and an argument I had at table with Nowak left a bad taste in my mouth... he scoffs about the Saints whose canonization he says is just a matter of people's ignorance and superstition.

I am still trying to finish my sermon but I can't seem to focus my thoughts and write down my ideas. My God, come to my aid...

Your help is most powerful! It is still very hard for me to overcome my apathy, my bitterness, my conceit and my weakness for sensible comfort and consolations. My Savior, strengthen my frailty which increases with each passing day.

Tomorrow I shall approach the sacred tribunal, my dear Jesus. How well have I prepared for that? Ah! take pity on me... do not let me commit one sin after another. Help me to conceive true sorrow for my sins, and after making a sincere examination of conscience, help me to accuse myself honestly. And dear Jesus, enlighten my confessor so that he may perceive clearly just what is the condition of my soul. Behold that soul! It wanders alone without direction or guidance in a maze of doubts regarding its spiritual state. Whom should I ask for advice or where shall I find some relief in my anxiety? Worthwhile people look down on me; the others simply avoid me. Those that seem to have at least some regard for me humor me along while in fact they dislike me. Even my real friends don't know what to think of me... however they dissemble their dubious sentiments in order to cope with me. Lord, You well know my heart and its faults, its evil inclinations, its despondency and perhaps its feigned resignation. In my forsaken condition, You Yourself be my guide! I know I do not deserve even a single glance of mercy from You but You did say that You wish to console the broken heart... ah! then, be sure to break mine that I might receive Your consolation and escape eternal punishment. So be it.

[44-b] March 28, 1835

My sullen attitude towards God weighed upon me throughout most of the day and sometimes I failed to try to overcome it. Several times I sinned by disregarding His inspiration in matters of sobriety and by my indecisiveness about getting my sermon written. As it turns out, our professor postponed the date for the assignment from Monday until the following Thursday.

Before confession I was quite distracted and upset on account the aridity and aversion I have experienced since yesterday. Today we were able to purchase a copy of *Homo Apostolicus*⁹⁹ for 1 florin,

⁹⁹ *Homo Apostolicus*, by St. Alphonsus Liguori. The latin version appearing in 1759, followed the original Italian *Istruzione e Pratica per un Confessore*, published in 1757.

24 kreutzer... and my concern for money grows every day! Sweet Jesus, my ill-mortified passions make me so wretched that I can't help but hope You will deliver me from their yoke. My curiosity... impatience to know the future... causes me acute discomfort. All I seek is some sort of comfort and there is no one to provide that. Who will help me to rid my devotion of all self-interest? I am on the point of tears because of my sorry state. Without a doubt it was my own fault that my confession left me unchanged as to my zeal and fortitude. Your love is growing fainter in my heart... the temptations to intemperance, bitterness and pride are growing more frequent and more intense. My zeal and joy in serving You are lessening. How I wish my faith were not so weak! And how can I ever go to Holy Communion tomorrow? I can but deplore, my Lord, the misfortunes brought on by my carelessness, my disobedience and intemperance. Instead of advancing each day in perfection I seem to fall back ...meanwhile, each passing hour brings me a little closer to death!

Guardian Angel, what will be my fate on Judgment Day? All the plans I made are but thorns that cause me pain which only You, O Lord, can know. Yes, I see clearly the good that I shall never be able to achieve because of my sins... for which I shall have to suffer all my life! I shall die unrepentant without ever having done anything worthwhile. Oh, Jesus, do not forsake me!

[44-c] My Jesus, here I am, assailed by temptation, and my faith is so weak I am unable to say a truly sincere prayer. Hear my voice and, if You can, help me in my weakness, in this pitiable state in which I find myself. Dear God, if I knew for sure that it was Your hand that was punishing me, I would perhaps endure the pain more patiently. My Jesus, if at all possible, grant me Your comfort. Come to me tomorrow and heal my heart. So be it.

March 29, 1835

I marshalled all my spiritual strength to receive the Blessed Eucharist as devoutly as possible. However, I was only partially successful. After Holy Communion my heart was troubled, upset and even somewhat disappointed. My inordinate desire to have a copy of the Life of St. Francis Xavier disrupted my serenity. I neglected to perform my accustomed devotions and at times that temptation to faith which I consider the most fearful of spiritual misfortunes, assailed me. Ah! what despair gnaws my heart! My sullenness towards

God makes it impossible to pray... my self-interest tempts me to abandon God's ministry. I know that if I serve Him as I should I will have to forego all comforts and pleasures of this world. In my present disheartened state I am led to believe that my Jesus did not actually die for me... that I have been rejected by God and shall suffer eternal misery.

I gaze upon the face of the Infant Jesus who is so lovable... but I wonder if it is just an illusion. Oh, forgive me, my Jesus! If only I had someone who could tell me exactly what the condition of my soul really is! It is for this reason that all my praying seems to be useless even though the things I ask for strike me as good. Prayer itself seems to be just an act of self-deception. I have come to doubt the value even of virtue itself since from the time I concentrated on my various pious devotions and on mortifying myself, I find I am growing ever weaker, more disconsolate, more tepid and discontent with my state of life. ,

It looks as though my plan to become a missionary will be like all my other plans... so many pipedreams. Apparently I am on the wrong path, for of all the people I know, no one but me is in this pitiful condition. The others seem to be prospering ... they somehow overcome their misfortunes. But if I receive a boon of any sort, two calamities will come fast on its heels! My God, do You [45] really want me to abandon the pursuit of perfection? O what shall I pray for? To whom shall I turn for the answer to my question? Everybody dislikes me.

How ardently I wish I knew that this temptation would soon pass! Then perhaps I could endure it more patiently... or is it meant rather to warn me of how far I have strayed from God? Dear God, if this wretched condition is not a temptation but simply the natural consequence of my corrupt flesh, then I beg You, if it be at all possible, to relieve me of this burden. The tears I shed seem to be mere products of my body or the fruit of my deliberate effort. Help me if You can, my God! My holy patrons, pray for me, the poorest and most disconsolate of men! So be it.

March 30, 1835

My gentle Jesus, today I made more of an effort to overcome that temptation which lasted continually at the same intensity. I owe my success in handling it mainly to You because You encouraged me to believe that this vile state gives me the opportunity to practice

some effects in my heart. What frightens me the most is that I shall never be content with myself... that my whole life shall be an unbroken chain of miseries and that You will never again grant me Your consolation or bring my plans to completion. My approach to the acquisition of virtue is based too much on the satisfaction of the senses... I take real joy in gazing upon the Infant Jesus, in reading my letters from Schmid or Schawel or even the life of St. Joseph Calasancius. No matter what it is, however, I seem to be able to find no comfort. I must be more restrained in my daydreaming about the future because that affects my imagination profoundly. What hurts me the most is that I apparently can't pray any more with a real sense of trust because I no longer know just what will please the Lord.

[45-a] It often occurs to me that I ought to limit my mortification to once a day because then my wishes would be fulfilled...but then I find myself invariably deceived and disappointed. What keeps me from trying anything different is the thought that I by so doing might lose all I have gained through such strenuous efforts... and these latter then would prove to have been utterly futile. Dear Lord, I thank You for the aridity and desolation You have deigned to send in order to strengthen me. However, I beg You, grant me a more solid faith because at the very moment I am about to decide to suffer the temptation patiently, I get the idea that the whole business is just a trick of my imagination which has been stirred up by all this reflection on the spiritual life.

You seem to be but little concerned about me... as if I no longer deserved a glance of mercy. That is what makes me yearn for death! Oh! if only I had someone with whom I could talk about these thoughts of mistrust of God's providence and mercy! What a muddle of doubt and anxiety I am in at this present time! Dear Lord, You could wipe me from the face of the earth... annihilate me utterly, and what could I say? Your holy name would still be blessed and glorified without me. Oh, come to my aid, dearest Jesus... I am so frail and weak! Holy Mother of God, You Angels and Patrons, pray for me that God may fulfill my desires! So be it.

March 31, 1835

That bitterness of heart has gone and I do now enjoy at least some sparks of God's love. Still, in my meditation I experience an insufferable dryness of soul. With what faith I have, dear Jesus, I

mortification. I trust You will reward me with further grace! My Jesus, You can readily see my frailty... it is self-interest that makes me courageous, not a disinterested love for You. Because I still love myself too much, my love for You is unable to produce such whole-desire to endure this with all the patience I can muster. Today I finally finished my sermon... it was You who gave me the spirit and energy to do so. Oh what can I do to thank You properly? Reading about St. Joseph Calasanctius has encouraged me in my resolve to endure any failure or disgrace in order to acquire that humility which You have promised to reward with the Kingdom of Heaven. Dearest Jesus, teach me this virtue. You know that I am still too conceited, too inclined to anger... even though I may dissemble it... help me then so that I may indeed make progress. Tomorrow I plan to copy my sermon so that I can hand it in to the prefect.

[45-b] Ah! my Lord, I beseech You to help me... after our walk today I was hungry and so I wanted to go to buy some apples. However You kept me from doing that! I accepted Your holy will and was thus able to go ahead with my work. Dear God, this experience gives me confidence! I plan then to fast more often and to forget my worries about the classwork. Just now I am not going to fret over that shipment of books to the Dean either. The fact that I haven't heard from Schmid or Schawel for such a long time has indeed cooled my ardor somewhat and not bothered me so much lately; I could say the same regarding the perception of my defects whether of theological knowledge or of memory or my unprepossessing appearance or a hundred other things!

Nevertheless, Lord, I do ask You to make me more competent. Enlighten, direct and perfect me... and I shall gladly go whithersoever You wish! My dearest Mother Mary, I come back to You... You take me to your divine Son and ask Him to make my life a little more pleasant and happy. As a matter of fact my difficulties just at present cause me a great deal of anxiety.

Holy Guardian Angel, intercede for me with God that He may let me know whether I should accuse myself in confession of a spiritual malaise of which I am not entirely sure. My holy patron, pray for me that Jesus Christ may forgive the sins committed in that temptation which seems to have eased now. All you blessed Spirits, pray for me and my friends, my parents, my benefactors and enemies. Intercede for the poor in souls in Purgatory! So be it.

April 1, 1835

My sweet Jesus, today I offended You by failing to mortify my desires as I should have, especially in eating several times without any real need. I did that so that I could keep on working on my sermon which I have nearly finished copying. Oh how can I thank You enough, my Lord? Forgive me, my Jesus... I offer myself entirely to You. Tomorrow I resolve to fast more strictly than I usually do so that You will pardon the sins I have committed today. [45-c] I thank You for being so kind as to return to me. Would that my heart were far more pure that it might offer a worthier dwelling for Your all-holy Majesty.

Ah! my most beloved Mother, cleanse my heart that it be pleasing to your divine Son. My Lord, command me... I am Your slave. O Divine Master, teach me... I long to hear Your word and engrave it on my heart. My holy Guardian Angel, abide with me. Lay my gratitude at the feet of God's majesty. Beg our Lord to grant me His grace. My holy patrons, teach me the virtues that have made you so pleasing to the eye of God. Pray for me and my parents, friends and enemies, and the whole Christian world. Pray too for the souls of the faithful departed in Purgatory. So be it.

April 2, 1835

I finished the sermon we had been assigned; we shall deliver them this afternoon. I am afraid I made a blunder in selecting the theme I did... and perhaps also in the theme itself. That is indeed a bitter trial for me! Still, my dear Jesus, I am grateful to You; You continue to chastise me by means of this sermon assignment and also the sorry business of the Dean's books. Tomorrow I shall write to my parents to have them send me Allioli's edition of the Scriptures.

My aridity of spirit and aversion for any serious work have bothered me all day. However, my God, I do thank You for the joy You have given me through my conversation with Kraus¹⁰⁰ on our way to and through the garden. He seems to be a splendid chap!

My Jesus, have pity on me and forgive me my sins. Rid me of my tepidity, my pride and my culpable weakness of heart. For rather a long time now I've noticed that I have been making little progress

¹⁰⁰ Fellow Seminarian.

in virtue. Jesus, my Savior, help me! How I long to be able to shed tears of genuine sorrow for my sins! Holy Mary, obtain for me this grace from the Lord. My Guardian Angel and my patrons, pray for me and all my neighbors. So be it.

[46] April 3, 1835

My desires fairly ran away with me today! Ah! my Lord, You have satisfied them in order to punish me and what can I do but be grateful for the love You show me in this fashion. Laad brought a book translated by Fr. Dichtl from the French. When I saw it all the old desires and plans from our days in Budweiss revived.

Oh, this frustration of mine is crushing me! I am worth nothing in the world... I shall be only a burden to everyone. My God, if it should be Your will and contribute to my own real happiness, then call me from this life of total desolation. It would seem that I am living in a sort of dream-world... its inconsistencies cause me endless aversion. Unless, my Jesus, You come to my aid, I shall go on aimlessly in my all-to-weak devotion. O Divine Master, bless me with Your love that can teach me all I need to know for my salvation.

Holy Mother of God, intercede for me, together with my Guardian Angel and my holy Patrons. Pray too for my parents to whom I sent a letter today, and for my beloved friends and benefactors and all Christians. So be it.

April 4, 1835

I was even more discouraged than usual today. Almost all day I was unhappy and assailed by the cruellest sort of temptations. Nevertheless, I did observe the fast and so mortified my intemperance considerably. The trouble is that this was but a kind of desperate gesture on my part... my difficulties have been so great that I actually set a date beyond which I would no longer serve God! Thereupon I would give free rein to my inclinations. Fortunately, I suppressed that sinful thought immediately. Yet now my hope is quite gone... despair shall surely crown my wretchedness unless You, dear Jesus [46-a] help me very soon!

How long, dear God, must I continue to languish in this loneliness and misery? I have a real aversion for all my various chores. The classwork I do simply to avoid some more severe punishment.

My God, is it true I am following the wrong path? Were not You Yourself my guide? Were all those mortifications of mine useless? Ah! my body, you certainly were foolish to suffer all those fasts and discomforts! Dear Jesus, if it be possible, save me from losing my faith! If I have already lost it, Oh do let me realize that, I pray You.

Divine Master, right now my feelings are quite indifferent about You... I have no great longing for either Your love or Your consolations. I know that my desires will only become a means of tormenting me. What a frightful void in my heart! My Jesus is no longer there... He has withdrawn to a more pleasant abode. Apparently He will never come back to me! And what shall happen to me now? Shall I become a priest or a fool? Whose priest? Or whose fool? Jesus? but He has rejected me. Or will He somehow take me back again? What shall I do... pray to You, Divine Master? But my prayers serve only to offend You! Oh! how hard it is to overcome old habits! Have pity on me, my Jesus.

Holy Mary, and my Guardian Angel and my Patron, pray for me and my parents, my friends and benefactors, etc. So be it.

With the meditation I made after the Prefect's talk until 11 a.m., I recovered my serenity of soul. For the rest of the day I tried to control my passions and to smother the slightest spark of pride or wickedness. I made this effort out of love for my Jesus who so kindly restored calm to my heart. What a wonderful thing it would be to be able to enjoy this tranquility forever! What must I do to avoid losing it again? I must immediately stifle the very first traces of pride, impurity, aversion or anxiety as soon as they surface. You, O Holy Spirit who have sanctified me, come to my aid! I thank You with all my heart for having inspired me today to make such wholesome reflections and resolutions. If You approve, I shall renew those resolutions each day when I rise at four o'clock.

My Jesus, I rejoice that You have granted me the grace of a solid faith, a most consoling hope and I look forward to receive an even greater degree of Your love! I resolve to begin all my actions with a prayer howsoever brief. Every quarterhour I shall make an offering of myself to You and make an act of resignation and love for You. Forgive me, my most beloved Lord, for the sins I committed today. I put too much stock in my own strength when I was reading an off-color book today. I ought to have stopped reading it sooner! I also failed to pay proper attention to my conversation; I laugh too much and occasionally thoughts of vanity occupy me. In general, when I am overly happy I become light-headed.

I intend to obey Your law as conscientiously as I can since You give me Your grace. I place my entire earthly and heavenly fate in Your hands. My Jesus, look upon me as Your disciple who wishes to leave everything to follow You, who will endure everything to be like You, O Divine Master. Just let me know Your holy will and I shall make every effort to fulfill it. I thank You once again for the graces You have given me this day.

My dear Mother Mary, I am so delighted to be able to believe that Your Son really loves me even though I well deserve to be cast off! I am sure that it was mainly You who obtained this grace for me. Oh remain always with me as my intercessor with God. My holy Guardian Angel, I thank you for watching over me so carefully today. My holy patrons, I love each one of You because You love my God much more perfectly than I can. Oh, pray for me... your intercession will crown all my weak efforts with success... as well as those of my parents, my friends and benefactors, etc. So be it.

April 6, 1835

Today I tried to recall the presence of God constantly and I succeeded except for one or the other quarter of an hour. Temptations appeared often enough and on some occasions I was close to falling. However, my God, Your mercy helped me rise above them. Sweet Jesus, tell me if this joy I feel just now is excessive. [46-c] Unless my joy has the Supreme Good for its object, it tends to make me forget God. Thus I really ought to restrain whatever joy arises from good fortune in the same way I do concerning unruly desires, for both drive God from the heart and leave it a prey to worldly pleasures. I won't be able to seek even supernatural graces... which I did pray for over a long period... since they too present the opportunity for forgetting their Author. May Your divine will be done, my Lord! I noticed today that I was not keeping the seminary rules exactly... especially those that in practice have been almost abolished by long-standing custom or by some questionable interpretation. I, however, must avoid even the slightest stain of disobedience since such breaches are inevitably the result of a lack of humility, of indifference and of excessive confidence.

My beloved Father, I don't want to burden my soul with so many lapses into hateful sin no matter what their source... whether from indeliberation or carelessness in checking whatever appears to

upset me and drive You from Your abode in my heart. That aridity which pervades my spirit just now and deprives me of every comforting thought, I gladly endure in conformity with Your holy will. After chastising my tepidity and my corporal and spiritual self-indulgence, I know You will return to me.

Holy Mary, I cast myself with great confidence upon your motherly love... indeed in your very bosom! Ah! after so many battles in which you have come to my aid, do let me rest there! Dearest Mother, heal me for I have been wounded by your and my enemy who is so bent on making me an enemy of both you and God. Still, I have no fear now because you will protect me in all my trials. My holy Guardian Angel, bear with me if today I failed occasionally to heed your advice and orders. I shall endeavor to fulfill every desire you stir up within my heart. Tomorrow lead me along the path of salvation which ought to be the main goal of all my efforts. My holy patrons, obtain from my God for me true zeal for His glory and teach His law to me and my parents, my friends and benefactors. So be it.

[47] April 7, 1835

Those temptations to faith assailed me several times today but I was able to resist them and so did not get upset. However, the aridity I often experience was so great at times today, especially towards evening, that when I tried to meditate off and on, I simply could not do so. My Jesus, even though my heart is cold and dry, I offer it entirely to You. You have been infinitely kind to me... why cannot I return Your love? Ah! my Savior, it is that I am weak and become disconsolate at every trial. Still, I am determined not to let myself get discouraged in the future. I will accept what You deign to send me for I know that You know what is best for me.

When I start to think of how unsuited I am to become a missionary I tremble with fear. Yet You, O Lord, can strengthen me if You choose to do so. Dear Jesus, I am happier just now than I really deserve to be... do You wish to send me some trials? I would hope to welcome You also in adversity. I want to walk in Your footsteps, Divine Master, and I shall not try to avoid the thorns in that path. Jesus, my God, take pity on my weakness; cast Your eyes often towards this poor sinner who has resolved to forsake sin to be Your disciple. Should You wish me to suffer, I shall bless You; should

You send me joy, I shall do the same since whatever You choose to do is for the best.

Nevertheless, I pray You to preserve me from all mortal sin and strengthen me against venial sin. Forgive the countless imperfections that often lead me to sin. This I beseech You, dearest Lord, with all my heart... do with me what You will... I shall endure every pain patiently and graciously, but do not deprive me of the grace I need to be virtuous. You be my guide, the director of my soul! For You know that everyone has abandoned me, I am bereft of every comfort. No one is here to correct or teach me. I realize I have brought all that on by my sins.

[47-a] I give myself entirely to You; You are my Savior... You lead me Yourself to eternal salvation! Holy Mary, dearest Mother of mine, take care of me, pray for me and my parents, my friends and benefactors and all Christians everywhere. Intercede for all of us, You Angels and holy Patrons in heaven! So be it.

April 8, 1835

This has been a very trying day... vicious temptations assailed me constantly. On one occasion they were actually successful. Ah! my Lord, have You forgiven me? You can see that I am truly sorry for my lack of fratitute towards You, my great benefactor. I wish that my contrition were so great that its tears might wash away my iniquity. You punish me by not permitting me to feel deep sorrow for my sins and I gladly accept that punishment since it comes from Your fatherly hand. O Spouse of my soul, come back within my heart and console me! I promise to be its guard so that no wicked thought or phrase may drive You out again. O Lord Jesus, I am such a great sinner and still You deign to take up Your abode with me. My Jesus, how I wish I could love You with all my strength! May Your holy will be done on earth as it is in heaven! What can I do to prove my complete conformity to Your will? Oh, I would gladly shed my blood for You, Jesus Christ, my divine Master. I am such a sinner and yet You heap me with favors. I place my whole being, body and soul at Your disposition. May I never again commit sin! I hope to fulfill all my duties, to accept Your counsel and follow Your inspirations. I shall do all I can to unite myself with You.

Whatever trials and sufferings You choose to send me, I shall bear them patiently and graciously. I shall try to love all those through

whom You punish me since I know they will be helping me towards perfection. I wish nothing, my Jesus, but Your glory, Your love and Yourself. I so desire to proclaim Your [47-b] mercy towards me to all who fear they have been abandoned because of their sins. Do with me what You will. But make me worthy to proclaim the abundance of Your grace. My Lord, most wise director of my soul, enable me to lead others to Your love. Dear Jesus, my hands drip with the blood of my sins... deign to wash them by Your sacred Passion on the cross.

Ah! Holy Cross! I embrace You fondly. The Master of my soul died upon You. O Cross of my Jesus, I press you to my bosom, I kiss you and I love you! Holy Mary, Mother of my God, take me by the hand and hold me fast to the Cross forever. St. John, obtain for me the grace to share at least some of the pain of my Jesus and to understand that it was my sins that caused it. Holy Guardian Angel and all my holy patrons, pray for me and my parents, my friends and benefactors. So be it.

April 9, 1835

Today will always be a memorable one for me... Laad brought me the happy news that R. P. Dichtl succeeded in escaping from some angry soldiers whose wickedness he had reproached. Ah! my Jesus, You know how happy I was to learn that this zealous proponent of our Faith had the chance to display his trust and confidence in You. Do strengthen me too and all future priests for these tests of courage in the face of a hostile world.

Today copies of Luis de Granada's *Memorial of the Christian life* arrived at the seminary but I am short of funds.¹⁰¹ I bless You, my Jesus, for Your boundless goodness to me who am nothing but the greatest sinner on earth. I would love to serve You with all the fidelity of which I am capable, but I beg You to enable me to love You better with each passing day. Your love, my Jesus, my God and Savior, can fill me with happiness without measure. Ah! But do look with pity on my weak resolutions.

Also today after supper [47-c] I talked with Laad about general confession and the Christian life. He wants to give himself to

¹⁰¹ Louis of Granada, Spanish Dominican and classic ascetical writer, 1504 (5 ?)-1588. The *Memoriale* was translated into German in 1834 and became available in the Seminary at Prague at this time (April 1835). See *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, Munich 1912, Ed. Michael Buchberger, Vol. II, c. 729.

You. O my Jesus, grant him all the graces he needs for that gesture.

I was not very recollected today what with the adventure of Fr. Dichtl and my defending him against Ryba during recreation and also the arrival of the new books, i. e., that of Luis de Granada and the Life of St. Vincent de Paul. Dear Jesus, I have come back to You now... tell me, Divine Master, where I have sinned mostly against You. If it was in flaring out at Ryba, then I shall make up with him. If it was in my aversion for my classwork or my failure to recall Your presence? Ah! behold my heart all pierced through with the most painful aridity. Forgive me the sins I have committed against You.

Tomorrow I resolve to try to love You more in my thoughts, words and deeds. O Holy Spirit, guide me! I abandon myself to Your holy will. You who sanctify all mankind, shower Your grace especially on R. P. Dichtl, on my parents and friends Schmid, Schawel, Laad and Krbeczek, and on all my benefactors, Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us and be our intercessor with the Father. All you heavenly Angels and Saints, intercede for us. So be it.

April 10, 1835

There was a certain tepidity about almost everything I did today. A fleeting aridity along with aversion dampened my usual zeal in whatever I attempted in the way of practicing virtue. I did make an act of resignation at several intervals during the day especially when something started to upset me and that invariably calmed matters for me. There were times when I began to enjoy the various exercises of devotion more than my different chores and duties. O my Jesus, do help me! In all the members of my body I feel a sort of difficulty about doing some good work. Even if I go ahead and do it, I do it without focussing my attention properly. Your grace appears to be less unctious... however, my Savior, do not think that I shall be so [48] feckless and unreliable that I shall withdraw from You in my desolation! The love You inspire in me obliges me to follow You wherever You lead me.

My Divine Master, I am still entirely too imperfect; my countless sins sometimes make me tremble with apprehension at the thought of how hard it will be to amend myself. And the fact that while I enjoy Your help and still make such little progress, fills me with trepidation for my own efforts. Do You grant Your mercy then to this sinner who tires so swiftly on the path of salvation? Ah!

my soul, take courage, attack your enemy head-on! He will flee for Your all-powerful Lord will protect you wherever you go. You are without a doubt very poor... you have nothing worthwhile to offer your Spouse who has left you. Still, you need not fear.. He will return immediately whenever it proves either useful or necessary to do so. You need not cultivate such a yen for sensible consolations because a true love of Jesus Christ is tested in times of misfortune; true virtue is strengthened in adversity; the genuiness of resolutions is proved by trials and hardships. You ought rather to praise Your Lord who has allowed you to endure this mood of indifference and aversion for good works. Take comfort in the truth that a single prayer howsoever brief and cold, uttered in adversity, is of greater merit by far than a host of prayers said amidst sweetness and consolations. If you are persuaded of this you will be able to accept aridity and desolation whether of body or soul with patience and serenity.

O my Jesus, I shall willingly take up my prayers again but my heart is so dry and cold that the slightest thought costs me a frightful effort. I wish then to fling myself into your bosom, dearest Mother of mine, ... you be so kind as to pray for the forgiveness of my sins. Beg your Son and the heavenly Father to look favorably on the gift I make of myself. Obtain for me whatever I need to save my soul and to reach perfection.

My holy Guardian Angel, be my trusted guide. Make me recall frequently the presence of my Jesus should I depart from the practice of virtue. My holy patrons, intercede for me. St. Vincent de Paul, obtain for me the grace I shall need to move the hearts of my fellowmen. So be it.

[48-a] April 11, 1835

O Jesus Christ, sweet spouse of my soul, You have deigned to bless me today with both aridity and consolation... as well as the patience to support the former! O fire of Christ's love, consume me... Fill me with your light that I may enlighten my brethren. Divine love of Jesus, You make my heart so very happy! Dear Jesus, is it because Your grace abides in me? Oh, my Savior, dearer to me than anything in the world, come Yourself into my heart. If only I had something to offer You in return for Your infinite love. However, what I have is Yours, my body and my soul, for I wish to love myself no more. You alone

shall I love always and everywhere. You Angels in heaven, come down from God's throne into my heart. Help me to prepare it to be the abode that would be proper for my infinitely great Lord. My Jesus, You deign to come to me, the most wretched creature in the world. I do not deserve even to know You on account of my sins.

O most holy Mother of my beloved Jesus, Mother of grace, remain with me all the days of my life. Keep me from all sin however slight since that offends your dear Son who has showered me with His grace. I simply have to love you, dearest Mother, because you brought into this world the Infant who can somehow still look happily upon me despite my temptations and despondency. How happy I should be to take my Savior, my Master and my God into my arms! Blessed Simeon, pray for me. Give a kiss for me to the little Infant whose smile so comforted you when you were on earth.

My holy patron, St. John Nepomucene, obtain for me the grace to persevere in the pursuit of virtue. St. Joseph, you obtain for me perfect resignation to the will of God. St. Ignatius Loyola, lead me to make devout meditations on the passion and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Vincent de Paul, obtain for me the grace of humility. St. Francis de Sales, obtain for me the grace to advance in the practice of virtue. St. Teresa and all you Saints in heaven, pray for all our earthly needs... [48-b] both mine and those of my parents and friends and benefactors, of my enemies and for the whole of Christendom. So be it.

April 12, 1835

I was thoroughly discouraged today, mainly because my friend Schmid hasn't written to me for nearly four months... and also because I still don't have any money to give the Prefect.¹⁰² Several times I had to make a real effort to check my yearning for human consolation. I know it is my lack of fervor that makes me conceive such inordinate desires that ruin my devotion. Now I feel quite arid of heart and I fear to pray lest in declaring my wants and requests I lose what little confidence I have in the power of prayer.

Behold me here, O my Jesus! Even though distracted and bereft of unction, I offer myself to You as a holocaust. I give myself

¹⁰² Presumably for the books he wanted to purchase. See the *Journal* for April 9, 1835. Neumann mentions the *Memorial of the Christian Life* and also the *Life of St. Vincent de Paul*.

entirely to You who have suffered all possible torments for me. Though I think of You all through the day I still commit so many faults. Pride, tepidity, sloth and envy torture me constantly and sometimes I am not sure whether I have consented to these temptations or not. My difficulties with the Prefect upset me considerably today... but it is my own fault because I do not beg the Holy Spirit often enough for light. I am in no condition for either prolonged or fervent reflection.

O Blessed Virgin, I commend myself to your protection. Intercede for this poor sinner. So be it.

April 13, 1835

My zeal for penance slackened very much today... aridity and discomfort converged to deprive me of my courage and trust. I have so little hope now when I see all my plans fall through even before I begin to carry them out. Still, I shall never stop loving You anymore, my Jesus, nor obeying You because since I am a Christian and I wish to continue to be one, I submit to Your yoke though at times it seems very harsh. Do with me what You will... I ask only that You do not permit me to fall into mortal sin or into that despair which assails me so often. Forgive [48-c] me for failing to fast as strictly as I had proposed to do. If You will be so good as to give me Your help tomorrow, I shall bend every effort to avoid repeating that.

Grant me, O my Jesus, the grace to meditate; banish the distractions that come to me when I begin to think of You. My tepidity and lack of fervor are so crushing that quite often I wish I were back in Budweiss so that I might have more access to comfort and consolation. Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, pray for me so that tomorrow I may be in a better frame of mind for my devotions. So be it.

April 14, 1835

I was upset with those temptations up until noon today. However in the afternoon I read something from Luis de Granada and recovered my calm of soul... the which I have kept until this moment. My gentle Jesus, how ardently I desire to have been more patient under temptation... I was even disgruntled over the situation! Ah! my Lord, I wish to approach Your Cross... do not reject me! I wish to clutch it to my heart and obtain Your forgiveness. Dear Jesus, I love You with all my heart. Your love fills me with joy... my heart

opens wide that You may come within me. Enter within me and soothe my passions. You already know what I desire: Your love is the aim of all my efforts. Cleanse my heart, O my God, that I may always rejoice in temptations, even the worst ones! My Jesus, I want to read further¹⁰³ to strengthen myself in my resolution, namely, to rejoice in the temptations You send me. Remain with me always, my Lord!

Holy Mary, Mother of God and my Patroness, obtain for me the grace to meditate with profit on the passion and death of your most beloved Son. The very sight of Him on the cross must have caused you immense pain... and won for us so many graces! My holy Guardian Angel and all you Saints, watch over me so that I may never lose the grace of God through my sins. Intercede also for my parents, my friends at Budweiss, my benefactors and my enemies. So be it.

[49]. Prague, April 15, 1835

My dearest God, how can I properly thank You who have been so infinitely good to me today by pardoning my sins? I who am but a vessel of rottenness, whose whole being derives from You, whose entire fate rests in Your almighty hands! My Lord, I would love You with all the tenderness of which my heart is capable. Grant Your divine love to me... I promise never to offend You again as grievously as in the past. Ah! forgive the countless heinous sins with which I have defiled my body, Your temple, and my soul, Your spouse. O my soul, your Creator and Savior who sanctifies you, hangs on this cross... He suffers unspeakable torments both in His sacred body and in His soul. The whole of Nature quakes with fear and horror, the spirits themselves tremble with awe at the sight of this wonderful mystery: the God-man upon the cross! And can you go on sinning against Him who suffered all to expiate your sins?

My most holy Master, I prostrate myself at Your feet... may the precious blood that flows from Your vast wounds wash every stain from my soul! Ah! sweet Jesus, do not spurn me, forgive my sins as You forgave those of the thief who had the good fortune to suffer pain like Yours. Pierced as I am, my Lord Jesus Christ, with the realization of my own unworthiness, how can I dare appear before You tomorrow? You are the God of the Universe in whose sight

¹⁰³ That is, from Louis of Granada as mentioned earlier in this entry.

this world is but a grain of sand! You keep all things in being, You are the almighty, the all-holy and all-just One who deigns to come to me tomorrow! O Lord, I do not deserve that You enter this vessel of rottenness, full of sin and aversion for Your grace and light. O my Jesus, [49-a] cleanse me first of all from all sin so that Your coming may not be another source of damnation for me. As for myself, I do not know how to remove even the lesser stains from my soul ...I can't control even the least unruly desire that comes along to upset me; how then can I presume to purify myself of such grave passions, so many sins and bad habits? O Jesus, have pity on me! Cleanse me forthwith that Your holy Majesty may not condemn me. My contrition is quite defective, my resolutions vacillating... how then can I hope to satisfy Your infinite justice? O Jesus, who have restored Your grace to this great sinner in the past, do not permit me to suffer any more punishment.

Mother of God and of mercy, come to my aid that my dispositions for Holy Communion may be such that I may profit from it as much as I can. My holy Guardian Angel, my friend and faithful protector, do not leave me tomorrow, I beg you! Obtain for me from God's throne the grace to receive Him worthily. My holy patrons, You friends of Jesus Christ, help me tomorrow. Pray that He may grant me all the help I need to advance in the way of salvation. Obtain the same graces for my dear parents and friends and benefactors, for my enemies and all others for whom I should pray. Be merciful to all. Amen.

Today I received a letter with ten silver florins from my parents. May God reward them for I shall spend them for His cause! Holy Spirit, watch over me that my spirit may always be with You! Amen.

April 16, 1835

I spent nearly all day in the presence of my God. I tried to keep in mind at all times the great blessing I had received, My sweet Jesus, I thank You for the grace You gave me today to avoid all mortal sin. How happy I shall be when I break the habit of committing even venial sin! My God, it is my frequent spells of inadvertence that [48-b] ordinarily lead me to sin. Oh, do not forsake my memory or my imagination so that I may remain always united with You,

I suppose I was also somewhat too indulgent with my fellow-seminarians... one should draw the line at a certain point! So I am

going to withdraw a bit from them. Regarding Fr. Prefect, I intend to be rather more gracious towards him than I have been until now. And when the opportunity arises I shall tell him of my plans and explain them to him.

I hope to be more careful in performing my various duties and to regard them with greater affection. Once again I resolve to offer myself to the Lord each quarter-hour and to stir up my love for Him as much as I can. On rising I intend to recite the prayers from *The Christian's Journey*; in the evening I will say the Penitential Psalms. I plan to continue to say my other usual prayers.

This evening I experienced a sort of disquiet in my soul. Though it was but a minor item, I did check it. My Jesus, You have suffered so much for me... I devote myself entirely to Your service. You be my Lord... watch over me, sustain me and heal me. The only desire I have is for Your complete and all-powerful love. That will teach me to achieve whatever good work You inspire me to do. Strengthen me, my Jesus... I want to do all that I can to obtain Your divine aid. I am feeling that aridity again... and I am grateful to You, my Savior. I wish to endure it gladly because it is a gift of Your boundless kindness. Heavenly Mother and my Guardian Angel and my Patrons, pray for me and my parents, my friends and benefactors and all Christians living and dead. So be it.

April 17, 1835

Today I began to lead a truly more devout life. Almost every quarter-hour I made my self-offering to the Lord, and I prayed frequently for the grace of His divine love and for His light in handling my difficulties with the Prefect whose treatment of me has been quite different lately. He seems to try to avoid me but the fact that he keeps a close eye on me betrays him. However, I do feel greater confidence in him and soon I shall be ready to reveal to him my spiritual state. [49-c] However, I also feel that this is such an important matter that it should not be approached too casually. If You, my dear Jesus, tell me to do so, it will be easier for me to go to him for my confession. Still, since I wish to act only in conformity with Your will, I place myself entirely in Your care. My God, fulfill Your divine plan in me!

Visiting the replicas of the holy sepulcher in the churches of the Ursulines, of Emmaus, of St. Stephan and St. Henry and of Teyn¹⁰⁴

increased my fervor considerably. Our Lord granted me the grace to actually feel devout even though I wasn't particularly eager in the beginning. In fact, I was quite angry at seeing the holy water so abused by the people. Still, the excitement of it all has remained with me and so I shall have to make a special effort to avoid relapsing into my old faults. I have in mind to lead a more withdrawn and fervent life and to check as far as possible my aversion for the Prefect and his closer friends among the seminarians. (Today I paid the two florins, 40 kr. C.M. for my copy of Luis de Granada's book.)

As soon as I shall have revealed my plan to become a missionary, I shall certainly have to take care to display the virtues that become such a vocation. My God, enlighten my spirit, guide my tongue, my steps and all my actions. Should You deign to send me shame or failure I will endure it gladly! O my Jesus, beloved Spouse of my soul, Lord of my spirit and my heart, I love You... but I beg You to make my contrition for my sins so intense that it will be perfect. Considering my past, how can these petty gestures reconcile me with You or help me to avoid further suffering in the future?

O my Jesus, if You do not come to my aid, this inveterate sinner will become even worse despite the experience of Your graciousness. O Blessed Virgin Mary, I turn to you now... obtain for me the grace of perfect contrition that will cleanse me of all guilt and spare me future punishment. I am all Yours, my Jesus. My holy Guardian Angel and my holy patrons, intercede for me, for my parents and friends and the whole Christian world. So be it.

[50] Prague, April 18, 1835

As a consequence of visiting those churches I was more disposed to pray today. The adoration of the Blessed Sacrament helped to ease the chagrin I felt occasionally at the thought of my friend Schmid's failure to write and of my uneasiness over the delicate situation with the Prefect. Still, I welcome the pain these two items caused me for in this way I can test whether I really love my divine Master. On the other hand, my intemperance gave me good reason for chagrin. Rather than fast as I had resolved to do, I ate both dinner

¹⁰⁴ This name is difficult to identify from the ms. Quite possibly, Neumann refers to one of the better known parishes of Prague, mentioned in Zschokke, *op. cit.*, p. 851-2 as the parish « am Teyn ». N. spells it « Thein » (?).

and supper even though I was aware that this would not be pleasing to God.

Ah! Guardian Angel, so many faults and sins, so much inadvertence and lassitude... how shall I ever overcome them? O my infinitely kind Jesus who have died for the whole human race, You are still my Savior. I am the greatest sinner in the world ...have pity on my soul! Pity my weakness and help me! I am beginning to feel that the old temptations are surfacing again and they will be even harsher than formerly. O divine Master, I shall live but for You for I have no other desire or will but Yours. If I should sin, O Lord, it will be as if I were stealing from You and I will expiate it with perfect contrition if You will give me the grace to do so.

Mother of my God, intercede for me and my parents, my friends and my benefactors. Amen.

April 19, 1835

The ardent desire I had this morning to receive Holy Communion has cooled considerably during the day. Serving as Subdeacon in Wisegrad made it impossible to maintain my recollection. However, I did renew fairly frequently my resolution to recall the presence of God and I made my periodic self-offering. After dinner Fr. Prefect came into our study hall. I was reading a book of meditations on the Gospel. He looked at the book and then asked me: « Why are you so interested in that sort of thing, » I answered: « Fr. Prefect, I'm sure you already know why! » He said. « Is it, then, permissible to theorize somewhat about it? » I replied in the affirmative. [50-a]. I must speak to him quite soon so that he doesn't bruit what he knows around the seminary. Premature disclosure could harm our project before it gets off the ground. My sweet Jesus, it was You who brought all this to pass... and I am grateful to You for I am sure it will redound to my good.

Alas! my Lord, why was I not more fervent in my youth? Had I been so, I would now be so much more pleasing in Your sight. On the contrary. I did not then grasp Your infinite goodness; I was utterly wretched. O my Jesus, You saved me from the edge of that abyss which at that time meant so much more to me than heavenly glory. Now, however, with Your divine light, I can see the splendor of my true homeland where You, my treasure, lie. Dear Jesus, I do so love You! My soul desires only You. Still, my flesh continues to

resist the workings of Your grace. It is lazy and sluggish, tepid and insincere. It does not hesitate to risk eternal ruin. O Jesus, I wish to serve You always. No relapse, no infidelity nor obstacle of any kind shall ever keep me from yearning for Your love or from accepting at all times Your holy will.

I am Yours! You be mine also. dear Jesus! Holy Mary, my Angel Guardian and my holy Patrons, pray for me that I may ever grow in virtue. So be it.

April 20, 1835

Today that habitual aridity of mine seemed to be worse. However, I renewed more often... though without undue pressure... my self-offering to the Lord, so that no anxiety crept into my heart. My feeling of aversion for the Prefect was more intense today. I am sorry about that, for he now knows quite a bit about me and my spiritual life. If I was mistaken, my God, in confiding in him, forgive my fault. I want to correct it as soon as possible. I intend to obey him and to defend him from all criticism and disparagement and to treat him with more consideration. Today I resolve to lead a more withdrawn sort of life... a more earnest life than I have led heretofore.

It would be considerably easier for me to recall the presence of my Jesus... a practice that has been so salutary for me... if I had a little crucifix to carry in my breast pocket. Then when temptation strikes I could press it tight! My Jesus, keep close to me in this business of mortification. So be it.

[50-b] April 21, 1835

My temptations were quite intense today. However, I was able to resist them, thanks to the help of my dearest Mother Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Though I really wanted to practice penance today, I actually accomplished very little, worn out as I was with all those temptations. Still, my special cross¹⁰⁵ gave me enough pain especially during the walk to St. [illegible]. What little trust I had in the Prefect is fading more and more today. Actually, I think I have to be grateful to You, O Lord, for the fact that I did not reveal our plans to him. What he does know about them is but vague and uncertain.

¹⁰⁵ Most likely, the uneasy relationship with the Prefect.

I was able to accept the dryness of heart that afflicted me this evening, knowing that my beloved Jesus permitted it. So I endured it with joy. My Jesus, I do not ever wish to separate myself from You again, for I love You with all my heart... more than I can say, as You well know. Ah! my Savior, be ever welcome in my heart. Save my parents, my friends and all Christians. So be it.

April 22, 1835

The ardor I felt over these past few days has slackened considerably. I wasn't overly inclined to recall the presence of God ...in fact, I did that but infrequently, when I made my act of self-offering to the divine majesty. Once I noticed that the mortification I was practicing proved harmful to my chest today, I stopped it. However, because of the fruits I expect from it, I shall try again tomorrow.

Dear Jesus, tomorrow will be my friend Schmid's feastday... St. Adalbert! Shower him with all Your grace; grant him health of body and soul that he may be able to make You known and loved in the world. Grant, too, that we may meet again in the next life if we should not be able to work together in this one. May Your will be done! Enlighten, strengthen and comfort his spiritual director so that he may be able to show him the path of salvation.

O my Jesus, forgive me the faults I have committed today, especially my carelessness in keeping my resolutions, the unruly thoughts I entertained about the Prefect and my tepidity. Holy Mary, I turn to you... intercede for me with your divine Son that He may take pity on me. All you Angels and Saints, pray for my parents, my friends and my enemies. So be it.

[50-c] April 23, 1835

My aridity of soul today bordered on actual laxity... and that upset me several times during the day. It came about because sometimes I forgot to recall the presence of God. I also failed to perform my duties out of love for God... rather I fulfilled them with carelessness and a certain distaste. A sort of pride slipped into my conversation with the Prefect. I spoke to him quite openly about my plan to become a missionary and he suggested I should become a Jesuit. I replied that I didn't think I could manage *that*... it does not seem to be a very happy life.

Towards evening I began to feel as though I could really be sorry for all the sins I have committed. However, my Lord, You did not apparently want me to pursue that. So, I am most humbly grateful to You. My Jesus, I detest the sins by which I have so gravely offended You. For tomorrow, I promise to be more conscientious, to avoid anything that might displease You and deprive me of the grace You have given me. Next Saturday I want to confess my sins, O my Lord, deign to fulfill my desire. I want to be better disposed than I have been in the past. My God, I surely do not deserve such a grace for I have already so often abused Your mercy. Forgive me all the sacrileges I have committed. I would fain wash them away with my own blood! O Lord all-powerful, never permit me to fall back into those sins which I have forsaken after so violent a struggle.

I hope to devote all the days of my life to Your service, my infinitely good God. Alas! I am but an ungrateful sinner. My beloved Mother and heavenly protectress, pray for me in heaven, whither God's grace has borne you. I approach, with contrite, desolate heart, the throne of your love for sinners who wish to return to the heavenly Jerusalem. The prayers I offer to God are too imperfect and so pervaded by pride that He cannot possibly accede to them! So, you yourself, my heavenly Mother, intercede for me. My holy Guardian Angel and my cherished Patrons... you, St. Adalbert whose feast I and my dear friend celebrate today... pray for this poor sinner that he may never fall back into sin. Help, too, my parents and friends and benefactors. So be it.

[51] Prague, April 24, 1835

My heart groans under the weight of my sins, my dear Jesus! Gladly would it feed on Your adorable flesh but that is impossible for it is so defiled. Ah! sweet Spouse of my soul, hear the voice that calls out to You. « Come back to me, come back to me! » Your spouse is utterly exhausted for she sees from but afar the sole object of her joy and desire. Without a doubt she herself is to blame... her faithlessness and indifference, and even contempt have impelled You to abandon her. Divine Master, You who know all things, are well aware of the intense longing she has for You. Come back, then, dearest Savior, my only good! Take full and swift possession of me that I may grow strong and fearless for the combat and that I may love You more sincerely than I have until now.

My Jesus, I give myself entirely to You; I shall never forsake You again. Neither temptation nor the loss of Your consolations nor even my relapse into sin can ever separate me from You again! For in the light of our holy faith I can now see there is no other name under which I can save my soul but Yours, dearest Lord. I lie at Your feet... do not cast me off! It pains me deeply to be unable to prove more clearly to You my devotion to You. Strengthen my weakness, heal my indifference for even after so many attempts, I myself cannot do so. How they grieve me, my intemperance, my constant carelessness and distraction at prayer, my distaste for my various assignments, my aversion for the Prefect, my inordinate desire for letters from my friends Schmid and Schavel, my prideful regret at being so ill-equipped for service as a missionary, etc.!

These are the enemies that harass me on all sides. O my Redeemer, save me from them! I beg of You through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, my protectress, of my Guardian Angel, my holy Patrons and all the Blessed in heaven. Have pity on me, on my parents and friends and benefactors and on all those who may despise me. Forgive us all! So be it.

[51-a] April 25, 1835

I was more devout today during the procession in honor of St. Mark than at other times. The sight of the Carmelite Cloister moved me profoundly. Certainly any pious soul who heard the monks sing would pray for poor sinners. Such a cloister would be very advantageous for me and, of course, the opportunity to converse with such men would be thoroughly delightful. The moment I saw the cloister I felt an unaccountable desire to devote myself to the direction of pious souls along the path of sanctity. O my Jesus, Your gentleness surpasses anything we might conceive of here on earth. You be *my* guide in this all-important business of my salvation. Provided that You do not refuse me Your all-powerful aid, the sacred tribunal shall be my greatest consolation. Dear Jesus, my heart goes out to You; it seeks only You! It entertains thoughts of You alone. You are the sweet consolation of those who seek after You... fill the void in this heart so afflicted with the realization of how poorly it has responded to Your love.

Were You to appear visibly again on this earth and I were to experience such a vehement desire, I would prostrate myself at Your feet, Divine Master, and beg You to show me everything I need to

know in order to achieve Your blessed vision and possession. O sole object of my love, enlighten me as to Your holy will. My joy and my consolation, lead me and guide me, for I sorely need a good spiritual director. I want to banish every improper thought, every trace of criticism, discontent and conceit. Help me, sweet and gentle Jesus.

Mary, my heavenly Mother, you have carried your divine Son in your most chaste womb... beseech Him to be my director. Obtain that grace for me so that I in turn may someday direct others properly. My holy Guardian Angel and most faithful friend, intercede for me and convey my homage to the Divine Infant Jesus. My holy Patrons, pray for me that I may become a devout and holy priest. So be it.

[51-b] April 26, 1835

Today I have endured severe anguish that brought me both joy and torment beyond description. The thought that my good friend Schmid is leaving me, that I am so thoroughly disliked, that with him I will be deprived of what really made life pleasant for me here... these are what has brought me the strange blend of joy and sorrow! When I reflect how I have failed to progress in virtue and am so weak, so much more vulnerable when I am enjoying God's consolations than when I am afflicted with grief and aridity of soul, ...when I think of how strongly I am inclined to bad habits once again and that with each passing day I become more imperfect and that my Divine Love shall someday be my Judge... these and a thousand other considerations make me tremble with fear. But I really don't know to whom to turn. If I pray to my God, He will surely offer me His grace. But then I don't correspond with His grace!

O Lord, do not allow this soul of mine to perish. It is the only one I shall ever have. I have offered You my will a thousand times... I wonder now if such duplicity will be my damnation? Forgive me Lord... I ask You so often for a good confessor who will direct me in the spiritual life and in whom I can repose my confidence. Dear Jesus, I am weeping now from sheer desolation... I truly hope they are tears of genuine sorrow for my sins. However, I am by no means deserving of such a grace. Give me the courage, most merciful Jesus, to fulfill Your holy will, for I am just now so sluggish of heart and so sin-ridden I feel I am about to despair.

O miserable youth of mine... how many excellent confessors would have been glad to direct me but, in my carelessness, I paid them no heed. That is why You are punishing me now. Be gracious to me ... I want to endure this suffering, no matter how painful, for I have really deserved to be condemned forthwith. Give me, my God, the strength I need to keep Your holy law, for without Your special help, I shall never be able to do so.

Holy Mary, Refuge of Sinners, do not refuse me your all-powerful intercession! Never, I beg you, do such a thing! Hear my plea! Angel Guardian, forgive my disobedience. My holy Patrons, I dare not ask for your intercession. Offer instead your own merits to my Judge that He may be lenient with me. So be it.

[51-c] April 27, 1835

Except for some intemperance in eating I was more mortified than usual today, because God's grace strengthened me in the practice of patience and gentleness. However, I almost always forgot that I had resolved to renew my act of self-offering regularly. Nearly all day I endured a sort of desolation and discouragement especially in view of my indifference regarding the acquisition of the virtues I should have.

My Jesus, I am truly unhappy with myself. You have blessed me with so many favors that now I wonder if these will be a source of damnation for me. My sensuality, pride and selflove are fearsome enemies and the struggle against them seems just too hard. My self-interest taints every virtue I practice... I am fast becoming merely a lax Pharisee. O Lord, be indulgent with me; have pity on my extreme weakness which hinders me from growing in love for You. I am indeed so disheartened that I must recur to all sort of ruses just to keep from deserting You who are my only hope!

My Jesus, despite the desolation that afflicts me now, I want to proclaim before the whole court of heaven that I intend to devote my whole heart and soul to Your service. All I have through Your infinite goodness, I offer to You as a sacrifice of propitiation for my countless sins. I would offer my heart, O Jesus, but it is too defiled by sin. Divine Master, what must I do to please You? My sole treasure, sweetest Jesus, my heart longs with all its might for Your return. Ah! do not delay, O heavenly nourishment of my soul!

Dearest Mother Mary, I fly to the bosom of your mercy. Pray

for this poor, sick slave of yours that the good Lord may heal him. My holy Guardian Angel, watch over me tomorrow. My holy Patrons, pray that I may make the sort of progress I should make. Intercede for me and my parents, for my friends and the whole Christian world. So be it.

Today I purchased a copy of the New Testament in German.

[52] April 28, 1835

My dearest Lord, today You have so solicitously preserved me from all sin, especially serious sin. By ridding me of the depression I've suffered recently, You have given me much comfort. But what was it that I did that was good enough to deserve that? My Lord, I am ashamed that I haven't been more conscientious about practicing self-contempt. I am sorry for whatever lapses I may have had in this matter today. It was Your love that enabled me to muddle through as well as I did... and I beg You to accept my gratitude.

My God, I resolve to perform my various duties each day with ever greater love for You, for You know, dear Lord, that within eleven weeks I am to become a priest and I am still such a great sinner. O holy Cross of my Savior, wash me of every stain of the body and soul that are to serve my Lord so intimately. For He is the Holiest of the Holy!

Most holy Mother, my advocate and patroness, intercede for me with the Angels and my Patron Saints so that the sacrifice I offer the divine Majesty may be acceptable. For no greater sacrifice is within my power since my sins have defiled whatever I have of good or beautiful. Have pity on my, my Jesus, and likewise on my parents, friends and benefactors and the whole Catholic Church. So be it.

April 29, 1835

That purpose of amendment I made yesterday held today until this evening when I read one of Horace' Satires which I enjoyed for the rhetoric. However, any profane reading, especially if there is no mention of God, destroys the spirit of recollection. Thus I resolve to avoid such books either entirely or, if I should read one, it will be just for a very short time. By engaging in badinage and banter I lied a few times... not seriously... just to spice up the conversation. Still, once I had committed these faults a definite aridity settled on

my spirit... which was all my own fault.

[52-a] Lord Jesus Christ, I am Your disciple; give me the grace to be able to spend the whole day tomorrow practicing the virtues I failed to practise today. Keep me, my God, from every sin, even venial ones so that I might serve You more faithfully when I have attained the honor and dignity of the priesthood. O Jesus, my divine Master, You taught the Apostles the truths of the Kingdom of Heaven and You sent the Holy Spirit upon them to enlighten and confirm them in truth... if it so please You, do the same for me, a poor sinner who knows only how to commit sin. Have pity on my youth and inexperience. give me a spark of Your eternal wisdom so that I might be able to communicate it to those who will be confided to my care.

O Holy Spirit, my God, inspire me with a genuine love and unflinching charity towards all men, especially the children. Make me holy so that I might lead others to holiness. I am Yours, O my gentle Jesus; Your yoke I gladly take upon myself and for that reason I shall never desert You again even though my sins force You to condemn me. So, You are in truth my dearest Jesus. Oh, do not permit me ever again to offend You through careless behavior. Abide with me always, Jesus, Heart of my heart! I shall do all that I can to avoid driving You away from me by my faithlessness and iniquity.

My Jesus, forgive the sins of my youth. Deepen my sorrow for them. With all my heart I thank You for saving me from the edge of the abyss to which I had strayed. How dreadful is slavery to sin! And how sweet and pleasant Your law! It makes me so sad to realize I should have served You from my earliest years. Have pity on me.

Holy Mother of God, my patroness, My Guardian Angel and my holy patrons, intercede for me, for my parents and friends and all Christians living and dead. Be kind and gracious to me. So be it.

[52-b] April 30, 1835

Except for a few moments of consolation this day has been one of considerable aridity from early morning. My Jesus, I thank You for enabling me to endure this patiently so that, in fact, I could rejoice in it! Do not let me fall into any sin again, even the slightest or venial sin, for I love Your grace and Your presence, and sin either diminishes them or deprives me of them entirely. My beloved Jesus, I somewhat boldly presume You have deigned to lead me to love You more perfectly now than heretofore and I am truly grateful. If only

I could prove my gratitude with a proper gift! My sacrificial offering shall be my submission to Your commandments and those of Your Vicars on earth.

Blessed Virgin Mary, dearest Mother of mine, how delighted I would be were I able to weep over my sins like a little child in your arms! But because of my sins, I am not worthy of such sublime sorrow... and therefore, I wish to endure this painful dryness of heart, this lack of tears, with perfect conformity to your will. I love you, sweetest Mother, who so often have interceded for me. Do continue to be my Patroness. Beg the Holy Spirit that I may never be permitted to relapse into the imperfection and indifference which I seem to have overcome now. Have pity on my utter weakness and inadequacy which are the source of my ignorance as to how to honor you more worthily. O heavenly Patroness, my heart belongs entirely and always to you and your Divine Son. Though my resolutions seem to make little difference in my conduct, you understand perfectly my attitude and disposition of soul. Obtain for me a thorough amendment of my bad habits. Help me to acquire all those virtues Your Son has blessed with joy and grace.

My holy Guardian Angel and my Patron Saints, intercede for me. So be it. The din in the Oratory today upset Fr. Prefect quite a bit!

[52-c] May 1, 1835

Thinking about Fr. Dichtl and my friend today made me feel so disconsolate, especially after supper, that I started to cry! ¹⁰⁶ Here I am... with all my carelessness and indifference while my friends in Budweiss are surrounded by remarkable people and enjoy wise and holy spiritual direction! They don't even think of me any more. In my loneliness and grief they have simply forgotten all about me. If I had proper supervision or help for my spiritual life, I would bear it all quite gladly. However, I am a weak and wicked sinner whose heart is broken... and there is no physician around to heal me.

O my God, I am despised and forsaken by all... I turn, then, to You Whom I have so often offended. I am afraid to address my prayers to You for despite all my resolutions, what good have they accomplished? I so frequently converse with You; I try so hard to know and understand Your law... but where is my obedience and my self-

¹⁰⁶ The friend referred to was Laad who, unlike N., had an admirable spiritual director in the person of Fr. Dichtl.

denial? So much time has passed... I remember my purpose of amendment and then fall victim of useless sentiments which are nothing but empty pious dreams. Alas! my trust in Your help has weakened once I perceived my constant relapses into sin as a result of my carelessness and laxity. I have no one with whom I can discuss this matter frankly... no one with whom I can talk about my relationship with the Prefect.

With these agonizing doubts and the welter of classwork and seminary duties I feel so very unsure of myself, without friend or guide. Nevertheless, my God and Heavenly Master, I thank You for this affliction... I deserve it a thousand times over! Unless You come to my aid though, what little moral fiber I possess will surely disintegrate completely. Forgive my importuning You, dear Lord! I am just a frail human being and so I pray You once again, ignore my sighs, overlook my tears, disregard these longings that beset me. I wish to be Yours alone... Your slave in heart and soul, for You are in truth my Lord! O Jesus, have pity on me... I cry for Your mercy.

Holy Mary, my Angel Guardian and my Holy Patrons, pray for me, for my dear father, Philip, my mother, my relatives, friends and benefactors. Enlighten me and make me holy! So be it.

[53] May 2, 1835

My heart's desire has finally been fulfilled! You have forgiven the sins I committed against You. This poor heart of mine is much more at peace now and alert to Your voice. Oh how happy I am to be rid of every shackle! From the depths of my heart I can say « Thank You, Lord! » for Your grace. Nothing shall ever separate me from You, my Sovereign Good. I resolve to collect my thoughts before and during prayer so as to keep Your sacred passion and death always before me. I shall love and kiss the Cross on which my Redeemer was sacrificed and slain for me. I shall mortify my inclination to indifference, my self-love and vanity, my anxiety concerning worldly things. Humility shall be my main goal... and I shall work steadily at it. Give me Your help, my dearest Lord!

Have mercy on me! Ah! my gentle Lord, my dearest Infant Jesus, You have deigned to give Yourself as food for my soul; You, the all-holy and all-just One have desired to unite Yourself with me! O Creator of the Universe, do forgive my unworthiness. All my bad habits and all the myriad imperfections that defile my heart shall not

drive You away! And I... poor sinner that I am... whither could I ever flee from You? My Jesus, despite the aridity of heart that besets me just now, I do indeed love You because You have given me the grace to do so. Still, I need for You to tell me what I must do to fulfill Your holy will. I wish I could prove to You how firmly I am resolved to submit to You. Ah! have pity on my weakness and vanity, my Lord!

Holy Mother of my God, Virgin immaculate, all you Angels in heaven and all you Blessed Spirits, come down to earth to prepare in this heart of mine a fitting abode for your Lord, the King of Glory and eternal majesty who shall honor me with His presence tomorrow. Calm every tempest within me, and all my passions. Help me check my unruly desires. Enkindle God's love in my heart. Pour forth the grace of the Holy Spirit upon my soul that heart and soul may be pleasing to my Lord and Master. Pray for me and my parents, for my friends at Budweiss, etc. So be it.

[53-a] May 3, 1835

O my Savior, You were not content with having pardoned me my sins yesterday! Today You deign to come to fill me with Your sacred flesh. Imagine! I have eaten the Lord, the joy and wonder of the Blessed in heaven! I have nourished myself with Him who was conceived in the womb of the immaculate Mother of God! And I? What am I but a dumb ox and the greatest of sinners? My Jesus, my soul has long burned with an intense desire to possess You. Now that it has received You, are You displeased? O my Jesus, do not be angry over my distraction and tepidity with which I approached Your holy table today. I am sorry about that; I regret the lack of fervor I have shown since receiving Holy Communion. For I have indeed offended You seriously by overlooking the joy and happiness You have given me.

I have wasted much of the fruits of my Communion and I have lost the headway I had made in the spiritual life. My gentle Jesus, I am thoroughly smitten with sorrow for having corresponded so niggardly with the grace You gave me. I embrace Your Cross and kiss it, for it is my sole hope! It is my lone support and consolation!

I would very much like to meditate on Your sacred Passion and Death, Divine Master, ... I wonder if I can learn how to perform that exercise of devotion so essential for my progress? Ah! Lord, You

be my teacher; I will heed Your every suggestion. I dearly yearn to advance in the way of perfection to which You have called me. Gentle Jesus, I resolve to follow whatever You may decide is best for me, but I am so weak I can no longer do my various assignments with the sort of love and dedication that would lead me to You. O my Jesus, I offer You all the pain my imperfections and sins cause me... for I am by no means free of these as yet! You Yourself can send me whatever sufferings will serve to check my wicked habits and inclinations... I intend to endure them patiently.

My friend's silence, as You know, is very painful for me.¹⁰⁷ However, Your love has enabled me to accept that pain. Dear Jesus, receive my prayers despite their distractions and dryness. Holy Mary, pray for me. So be it.

[53-b] May 4, 1835¹⁰⁸

O my Jesus, I spent today amid much unrest and distraction... but how can it be otherwise since I so rarely think of You. Dear Jesus, I am truly sad to realize how ungrateful and uncooperative I am with Your grace which You offer me daily and hourly, particularly yesterday. As, however, my concern with all its desires and yearnings is so very inordinate, still that does not upset my soul which longs only for You, my greatest Good! I grieve deeply that I so frequently yield to that inordinate concern and so waste the countless graces I might have had. If I were more restrained, more recollected and serene today, how gladly I would stand in spirit by Your holy cross, embrace and kiss it and, with all the pious people on earth, weep over my sins. O World, were I completely detached from you, how I would love to serve my Redeemer alone by constant prayer. If my soul were only unshackled from this body, it would soar aloft to You, the Creator it yearns to love alone! But since this poor soul is still bound to its mortal coil, its heavenly flight is stymied.,

Oh, if only I could die and find mercy before Your throne, my God! You are my only consolation. I resolve to do all I can to

¹⁰⁷ That is, the failure of Schmid to write to him.

¹⁰⁸ This entry was made not in the usual French but in Neumann's native German. Except, possibly, that he was pressed for time, there seems to be no special reason for this. On the only previous occasion when he reverted to German (see Journal for Oct. 12, 1834) it was perhaps due to his having just received some very disturbing news and thus spontaneously reverted to his native tongue.

draw near to You, my Rest, my Hope, my Love, my All! O Lord, have mercy on me. Draw my heart to You 'midst all the confusion of this world, lest it falter on the way. Oh see how weak and wretched my soul is, how long and arduously it has struggled! Wounded and near death as it was, You came, dear Savior, and healed it. Therefore it desires to follow You whithersoever You may go. Yet it is so weak and weary it longs simply to rest. Oh, call out to it that it may not lose sight of You and in its weakened state be forever lost!

Indeed! how very good You have been to my soul! For the first time seven years ago, when I did not yet know You and was just beginning to have a holy fear of You, You gave me that consolation.¹⁰⁹ To my utter astonishment the tears flowed copiously that night! How I relished that sorrow! What peace those tears, companions as they were of God's grace, instilled in my heart!

O Lord, on that occasion You strengthened me so that in my distress of soul, I was able to confess my sins to Fr. Cheun (?) and later to Fr. Nitsch (?)¹¹⁰ as a means of growth in the spiritual life. How lenient You were with me then! O Father in heaven, how ungrateful am I that I so infrequently recall Your boundless goodness to me. Before I ever realized [53-c] that it was Your Providence caring for me, You gave me lavishly of Your grace. Now I know all about it. Still, my Jesus, Good Shepherd, because I am blind and faithless and indeed wicked, I invariably regard the manifestations of Your grace now as misfortunes. Do not turn Your eyes away from me! I am but the wretch whom You have deigned to inspire with a yearning for Yourself. Grant that I may imitate You in all I do. Lead me to perfection, my Jesus. Give me Your grace. Oh, do listen to the pleas of this forsaken soul! I have no friend or director here, but that will not bother me if only You will agree to be both for me! So have pity on me and be my director. Do not suffer me to be lost because of my sins. All you blessed spirits in heaven, pray for me. Today I purchased the 4th part of Canisius's work for Schmid and myself.¹¹¹ May it promote Your glory and my salvation! So be it.

¹⁰⁹ Neumann refers to the gift of tears as a visible sign of sorrow for sin.

¹¹⁰ The names are nearly illegible. Presumably they were two priests assigned to the seminary in Budweiss.

¹¹¹ The *Summa Doctrinae Christianae*. See *Journal* for Oct. 9, 1834, note no. 20.