

[March 30, 1854]
Rome "66 Via Ara Coeli"

My dear Brother [John Bowen]

Your letter followed me to this place, where I am stopping to have our Rule examined and approved, but the likeness of dear little Mary was not sent with the letter but kept till I return.

Thank you very much for sending me something of dear Georgy and I need not say how happy I feel for [him] and all you tell me regarding both Elizabeth and Mary - As you had a dispensation it is all right both for her and for the dear children.

Your letter tells me throughout how little you understand my heart and feelings either regarding the sacrifice of the world or the giving up of natural happiness with my darling children, ever dearer to me than my own life. I have long since given up the world (without casting aside the good habits of civilized life) and my dear children were as much under my eyes as if I had not left the world till their father broke his word and his promises and stole them away from me in a moment of excitement and unjust anger, may God forgive him.

I am much interested in all that you tell me concerning yourself & family and I should like to have a Convent at San Antonio very much if you think the Bishop would wish it: but I could not promise to come there myself unless with the consent of our English Convents because I am not my own mistress quite and have only to do that which our Chapter decides upon as wise, & prudent and good; But this need not prevent your having the advantages – others being sent - and as we are devoted to education of the highest standard both among the poor and the rich, it would not be a small benefit you would confer on your neighbourhood by founding a Convent. If you should come to any conclusion to enter upon this make the offer

(continued below)

to Bishop Odin to secure two hundred acres of good land for a farm in trust for our Community and I will raise £100 (\$500) towards the building of the Convent. But unless the good Bishop enters into it heartily and is anxious to have us there I would not make the least advance as I am convinced he is much better able to judge in the matter than either you or I could. I have just had a letter from Ady - She tells me that Mary is well married, and seems to think her troubles are nearly at an end. Kate & Julia are with her. She has indeed had her troubles and perhaps much less through her own fault than you think - It is always best to err on the side of charity, and the safest to take the best view we can of everyone, especially of our own family.

Ever your own

Sister C.