

“is without its Vicar Apostolic, i.e. Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, Discalced Carmelite, who “has resigned that employment, His Holiness, therefore, has appointed as Vicar Apostolic “instead Monsignor d’Oea, a bishop in *partibus*, together with the whole revenue, except “for 100 scudi reserved for a pro-vicar to be chosen and deputed at the choice of the Sacr. “Congregation, and who is to be in charge of the administration of the diocese of Baghdad. “So, as there does not seem to be anything more appropriate than to choose as pro-vicar “a Discalced Carmelite Religious in view of the proximity of their mission to that diocese, “the General of the Order in question proposes Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, Discalced “Carmelite, a native of Burgundy, who, although young in years, is very learned and “well bred.

“Rescript. . . . They decided to depute a pro-vicar in the person of Fr. Emmanuel. . . .”

From the secretariat of Briefs, there had already been sent to the Sacr. Congregation, 31.7.1728,¹ an explanation

“as regards the Briefs to be issued for Monsignor the Bishop of Oea, the one as Vicar “Apostolic for the diocese of Baghdad, in accordance with the decision of His Holiness “expressed in the attached note, and the other for there to be attributed to him the income “from the Luoghi di Monti appertaining to that see, to last as long as there will be a vicar “apostolic. . . . Although the deputation of Mgr the Bishop as Vicar Apostolic seems useless “in itself, it is not so, however, in the” (attendant) “circumstances, as His Holiness wishes “a pro-Vicar Apostolic to be made. . . .”

(“On 6.8.1728 a Brief had been issued by which Fr. Bernard of Jesus, Discalced Carmelite, Bishop of Oea, was instituted Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad, the obligation of “residing there being transferred to a pro-vicar. . . .”)²

Thus it came about that, 29.11.1728,³ Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, of whom much will be quoted in the next chapter of this work, wrote to the Cardinal Prefect:

“Only a few days since, just as I was about to go on board the ship, I received your “Eminence’s letter and so was overcome by exceeding great astonishment on seeing that “the Sacr. Congregation had deigned to set their eyes on me, and appoint me pro-Vicar- “Apostolic for Baghdad, when there are so many more worthy. . . .”

He reported to the Sacr. Congregation that he reached his place of residence, Baghdad, “towards the middle of September 1729.”⁴ But before that date Fr. Joseph Mary, who, *vide* his letters of 28.3.1729 and 20.5.1729,⁵ had

“celebrated the Easter festival with solemnity⁶ . . . I had asked the governor to (be “allowed) to have here a house, and was thinking of soon blessing it . . .”,

received a letter from Fr. Emmanuel from the frontier of Palestine, and so, 10.9.1729, quitted Baghdad. But receiving *en route* earnest requests from his successor to remain supervising the Christians until the new pro-vicar had learnt the language and something of the country, he allowed himself to be persuaded to turn back to Baghdad.⁷

That was across the border in Mesopotamia. But at Julfa the closing years of the Afghan tenure of sovereignty saw the Catholic Missions with their bishop in almost desperate straits. He wrote, 17.9.1727:⁸

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 10.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 28.

³ At that date, 1728, there were two churches in use at Baghdad, one Nestorian, the other Armenian. See Fr. Joseph Mary, 6.12.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 56).

⁴ *Vide* letters of Fr. Joseph Mary, 6.7.1729 and 12.7.1729 (*S.N.R.*, III, pp. 533-5), and 10.12.1729 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 52).

⁵ *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 546.

⁶ *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, p. 287.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 546.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 34.