Dr. Albrecht Classen
University Distinguished Professor of German Studies
The University of Arizona
Copyrighted 4-17-2011

The Letters by the Swiss Jesuit Missionary Philipp Segesser

Introduction

The Swiss Jesuit Missionary Philipp Segesser

The purpose of the present book is to introduce the Swiss Jesuit Missionary Philipp Segesser, the history of the Jesuit Order, their missionary activities in modern-day Mexico and the Southwest of the United States (Arizona), to explain the so-called ‘black legend’ concerning the Jesuits, and then to present Segesser’s letters for the first time in English translation. Segesser was born as the third of seventeen children of the Swiss city councilor and bailiff Heinrich Ludwig Segesser (Lucerne) and his wife Maria Katharina Rusconi on September 1, 1689. On October 14, 1708 he joined the Jesuit order in Landsberg, studied in Ingolstadt (among other places) from 1719 to 1722, and took his vows as a priest on June 8, 1721. On February 2, 1726 he took his professo quatuor votorum, and the same year he was chosen for the Jesuit mission in Paraguay. The plans then changed, and in 1729 he was finally allowed to travel, but to Mexico instead, where he arrived the next year. In 1731 he traveled to Sonora and worked in the norther province, today part of Arizona, until 1734. For health reasons he had to leave and resumed his work in Tecoripa until 1744, and from then in Ures for the rest of his life. From 1750 to 1754 he was the Visitator of Sonora, a kind of spiritual and administrative leader of the province, and in 1758 he was the testamentary executor of the killed Governor Juan de Mendoza.¹

The Jesuit Order, Missionaries, and the New World

Many rumors and legends concerning the Jesuits exist and often cast a rather negative light on this religious order. It was founded in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola with the intention to renovate the Catholic Church, to restrengthen the Catholic faith, and to return the individual believer back to the ideal represented by Christ. In the wake of all those concepts, Loyola also intended to combat the consequences of the Protestant Reformation launched by Martin Luther with his ninety-nine theses nailed to the door of the castle church of Wittenberg, northern Germany, in 1517. The Reformation had quickly swept through all of northern Europe, and also began to exert considerable influence on the Mediterranean countries. The Jesuits, however, became one of the major driving forces to reconstitute the sweeping influence of the Catholic Church, at least as far north of the Alps as southern Germany, especially Bavaria and Austria.
Nevertheless, the “Black Legend” that negatively targeted the Jesuits was almost uterine in form and quickly emerged after the founding of the Order because of its close association with Spain, because of the Jesuits’ rejection of worldly honors, then because of their unwillingness to take on major administrative positions in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church—meaning that they held a confusing outsider role in comparison to all other monastic orders—because of their stern and sober appearance and performance in public, the military structure of their global organization (their founder Loyola had originally been a soldier), and because of their great emphasis on humanistic, to some extent almost secular learning, which positioned them oddly between the ecclesiastical and the worldly sphere. Insofar as the Jesuits were quite successful in combating the Protestant Church and in bringing scores of people back to the fold of the Catholic Church, Protestant propaganda in the form of fly-leaves, or broadsheets, aggressively addressed the Jesuits and their ‘devious,’ ‘sabotaging,’ untrustworthy, and ‘unholy’ operations, targeting them as most dangerous deceivers and seducers who never should be trusted. For instance, one such broadsheet with its brutal condemnation of the entire Jesuit Order was published in Germany in 1632 during the Thirty-Year War when the Swedish troops had conquered southern Germany and had forced all Jesuits to leave their province (1631-1632). A whole treatise had already appeared in 1620, severely challenging the Spanish crown and their allies, the Jesuits, as the most severe threat to the Protestant Church.

Ignatius’s original Basque name was Iñigo López y Loyola. He was born in 1491 and formed a religious association with other students at the Paris Collège Sainte-Barbe after having experienced a deep conversion subsequent to a serious injury in wartime when he exposed himself to the four volumes of De Vita Christi (Life of Christ) by the German Carthusian Ludolf of Saxony (ca. 1350-1370) but in a Catalan translation, and to the Legenda aurea (The Golden Legend; a collection of saints’ lives, ca. 1260) by Jacobus de Voragine. Loyola intended to lead a life closely following the model provided by Jesus, living as an hermit at first, but then he realized that he was really to work with and for those in need and suffering. He also went to Rome on a pilgrimage and to pursue a calling to priesthood. On his way home in 1524 he then finally decided to become a priest, which required from him intensive studies at various universities, finally at Paris. But repeatedly the Inquisition questioned him and his six followers whom he collected around him between 1529 and 1534, suspecting heresy in their thinking and work as lay preachers. Already in 1525 Loyola met another student in Paris, Francisco de Xavier y Jassu (1506-1552), son of a Navarra nobleman and of Basque origin, who was later to become the first Jesuit missionary and died in Sancian, an island not far away from modern-day Hong Kong. Loyola and Francisco de Xavier then founded the Society of Jesus in 1539, which was subsequently acknowledged officially by Pope Paul III on September 27, 1540. The situation was highly opportune because the Pope had already begun to send individual members of the group to various parts of Europe as preachers and confessors.

When Loyola died in 1556, the Order was already well established and quickly spread in all directions, soon assuming global dimensions because the Jesuits primarily pursued the goal of converting the non-believers in order to protect their souls, not to speak of the Protestants and members of the other monotheistic religions, and this, as their main motto says, “Omnia ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam” (OAMDG: Everything to the Greater Glory of God). The other major intention was to provide solid education as the basis for the Christian faith, which led to the foundation of famous schools and colleges. The Jesuits thus tried to counterbalance a major propaganda tool by the Protestants against the Catholic Church which was often determined, or rather undermined, by uneducated or ignorant clerics.
This emphasis on education in turn strongly motivated the Jesuits to focus much on scientific research, for which they are famous still today. Finally, the third prong in the Jesuit agenda was, of course, to stem the flood of the Protestant Reformation, and the Order actually became extremely successful in this endeavor, particularly in those lands that we identify today with Austria, parts of Switzerland, and southern Germany.

In their missionary work abroad the Jesuits pursued their goals rather aggressively both with the native population, the target of their conversion and preaching efforts, and also against the secular powers, that is, especially the Spaniards who in many ways blocked their religious ideals and goals for monetary purposes. Many reasons came together quickly to arouse deep suspicion, anger, and envy on the part of the Spanish and Portuguese rulers and princes, administrators, mine owners, merchants, farmers, and soldiers who probably rightly felt threatened in their colonizing attempts in South and Central America. One of the main concerns on their part was that the Jesuits constantly insisted on their divinely instituted right to protect the native population from brutal abuses by the white plantation and mine owners, among many others. Moreover, the Jesuit Order adamantly fought against political and military developments resulting from global agreements between Spain and Portugal regarding the division of the South American continent, originally established in the treaty of Tordesilla from June 7, 1494, and finally concretized through a set of rules and regulations instituted on January 13, 1750. This implied, for instance the removal of all Indians (Guaraní) in seven Jesuit Reductions (or provinces) in Paraguay and their missionaries east of the river Uruguay. The Indians revolted against the attempts to resettle them, which resulted in a bitter military conflict in January of 1756 ending with a complete victory of the Spanish and Portuguese troops over the natives.

We do not know to what extent the Jesuits were involved in this conflict on the side of the Indian population, but European observers identified them as the key culprits. In Portugal, however, the Jesuits enjoyed the support of the King Joseph I, whereas the minister of foreign affairs, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo Pombal (1688-1782), who was minister of the kingdom from 1750 to 1777 and rose to the post of Marquis of Portugal in 1770, struggled hard against the Order as part of his enlightenment policies aiming for the secularization of the state. The Jesuits were closely aligned with the conservative Portuguese nobility, whom Pombal also tried to weaken as a political and economic force in order to pursue his absolutist agenda to strengthen Portugal under his personal control in economic and political terms and to establish a truly centralized government. When someone tried to assassinate the Portuguese King Joseph I on September 3, 1758, Pombal used this as a pretext to intensify his lobbying and outright political opposition against the Jesuits, and so he was finally given the permission on January 19, 1759 to expel them from their American missions.

In Spain, on the other hand, the dramatic increase in the size of the population during the first half of the eighteenth century led to massive governmental regulations of the agricultural sector to secure national food supplies. Many groups staged loud protests, and the political observers were quick to blame the Jesuits as the alleged secret instigators, although there is no clear-cut evidence for this claim. A massive riot against the government, the Motín de Esquilache, at the end of March 1766, was directly blamed on the Jesuits. Consequently a major investigation was carried out, the report of which then appeared on December 31, 1766. Here, its author, Pedro Rodríguez de Campomanes, sharpened his attacks against the Order and was successful in his political agenda. He heavily drew on writings by Juan de Palafox y Mendoza (1600-1659), who had been Bishop of Puebla since 1639 and had then returned to Spain in 1649. The latter had had numerous conflicts
with the Jesuits in Mexico, probably over property rights and political influence, which made him feel deep hatred against the entire Jesuit Society.

On February 27, 1767, King Charles III ordered the expulsion and imprisonment of the Jesuits. Since the Jesuit Order was a global organization, every event at its center and at its outer limits had an impact on the entire structure. While the German-speaking Jesuits in the northern part of Mexico only heard some general news about those political, economic, and religious conflicts back in Europe, they also became victims of the catastrophic fallout, being forced to leave their missions in 1767 and to return to Spain, where most of them were imprisoned for many years without ever facing a judge or being condemned in a regular trial. But we should be very clear in our critical assessment that the myth of the rebellious Jesuits who intended to create their own independent kingdom, that is, in Paraguay, and thereby planned to undermine all royal authorities back in Europe, was deliberately launched by Pombal, especially by means of the publication of various volumes, such as the one entitled Nicholas I, King of Paraguay and Emperor of the Mamelukes, allegedly by a Jesuit, but in reality by one of his own agents.

Of course, the Jesuits also clashed regularly with various Indian tribes, sometimes even in military terms, particularly because they tried to force the native population to settle down, to turn into farmers, to abandon their old nomadic culture and religion, their often problematic hand-to-mouth existence, their tribal mentality and constant warfare against each other, and hence to change radically their entire lifestyle and belief system. A number of missionaries, especially in Sonora, were even killed in some uprisings, such as the German missionary Johann Ruhen, who died in Sonoita (today Mexico just south of the US border) in 1751. As Franz (Franciscus) Havier (1691-1725), for instance, reports in a letter dated January 30, 1723, now included in the eighth part of the famous Welt-Bott from 1726:


[The very last mission to the north is currently located in the recently discovered land Nayari, in which our Father Ignatius Arias has preached, as the first one, the
teachings of Christ. He is still alive and said good-bye from me recently after he had arranged the matters of his mission in Mexico and after he had begged for some gifts for his cruel Indians. His chest is covered with scars from those arrows with which he was welcomed by these barbarians at his first arrival. He is truly an innocent (pure?) and courageous man whom I have embraced as a future martyr and whom I wished him good luck for such a victorious branch (?), though I do not know out of what motivation. He lamented the loss of several Apostolic laborers (missionaries), and this no less than Father Augustinus de Campo who has increased, together with the Reverend Father Eusebio Chino (Kino), a man from Trento in our (German) province, the number of those believing in Christ among the Pimas, and who is going to return there once again. He assured me that, if a whole province of Jesuits from Europe would come into that region, everyone of them would find enough work there. I wanted to mention this only for that reason in order to intensify their desire to go into the mission, which is glowing already in their hearts. The others, however, God may motivate with the words by the Priest Zachary . . . .] 

In other words, no one was mincing words as to the really tough conditions which the missionaries would face in the New World, especially in the northern region of Mexico. In fact, the new Jesuits arriving there were all fully aware that they could easily become victims of hostile conditions, confrontations with the natives, or die from a variety of sicknesses there. Hence, there was a clear sense of martyrdom which they might have to suffer, and almost longed for out of a religious dedication. Reaching the northern parts of Mexico, Sonora, was tantamount to arrive at the end of the known world and to leave all known western civilization behind. But precisely this very perspective prodded many of the German-speaking and other Jesuits even further to abandon everything in Europe, both friends and family, their traditional jobs, the comfort of their home and fatherland, even their native language, and to embark on a journey from which they would never return, here disregarding the forceful expulsion in 1767.17

Of course, the Jesuits were not completely exceptional in their missionary zeal, and many other Christian missionaries from different orders and national origins pursued rather similar goals all over the Americas, though they might have differed in their methods and specific religious orientation within the framework of the Christian Church—especially the most successful Franciscans.18 Nevertheless, irrespective of all their idealism and infinite dedication, the Jesuits faced jealousy and envy from many sides because they were so successful in their missionary activities, because they often made a very successful effort to protect the converted native Indians from the Spanish or Portuguese mine and plantation owners, and also because they sometimes launched stinging criticism of the Spanish crown or the Spanish colonizers in their genocidal approach to the native population in the imperialist conquest of the lands.19

Other Catholic intellectuals, such as the Bishop Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484-1566) and Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546), from very early on had also attacked the devastating abuse of the native population at the hand of the colonialists, which later provided, in a twisted way, useful fodder in the ideological warfare against the Jesuits and the colonizers at large, accusing them, *grosso modo*, even of criminal treatment of the American Indians, when the opposite was really the case.20 Finally, in 1767 the Jesuits were banned in Spain, France, the Two Sicilies, Parma, and the Spanish Empire, followed by a decree issued by Pope Clement XIV in 1773 suppressing all Jesuits, except in Prussia and Russia where the Catholic Church could not exert its influence. This meant
in practical terms that a large number of missionaries were forcefully removed, or expelled, from Mexico and all other parts of the American continent, transported back to Europe, mostly under inhumane conditions, thrown into convent prisons, and often never released again without ever having been taken to court or faced any concrete accusation.

The edict of expulsion was issued by the King of Spain, Carlos III, in 1767 for many different reasons, both political and religious, both monetary and emotional (see also above). It was, to be sure, a tragedy of global dimension. Not only did many of the missionaries who were brought back to Europe against their will die on the way, or later in one of the prisons. Between 1767 and 1769, 2,273 expelled missionaries arrived in Puerto de Santa Maria near Cadiz, Spain, but several hundreds of those forcefully removed from their missions in New Spain had already died as a result from the suffering and stress. As a consequence of this tragic development, countless missions were abandoned and decades of intensive and most productive work by the Jesuits was wasted and ruined mostly for nothing but irrational political and religious reasons. As Herbert E. Bolton aptly put it when he evaluated the actual contributions by the Jesuits, obviously expressing a scathing criticism of the motives behind the brutal and unexpected expulsion:

The black Robes performed many services for the border Spaniards as well as for the neophytes. The mission was the agricultural unit for a large part of frontier Spanish America. There the missionary organized and directed most of the agricultural labor. The mission not only raised produce for its own subsistence, but from the surplus it supplied neighboring soldiers, miners, and cattlemen with agricultural products. The missionaries, by gentle means, subdued and managed the Indians, went as diplomats to hostile tribes, and helped to pacify the frontier in time of trouble. The mission itself, with its fortified plant and its usually loyal native defenders, often served as a bulwark against hostile neighbors. Regarding frontier matters, religious or secular, including international relations, the missionaries helped to mold the opinions of central officials, and were often called to Mexico, or even to Spain and Rome, to give advice. Instructions issued from Europe on such matters were both shaped and interpreted by the men on the frontier, for they were the ones who best knew conditions.

With the end both of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars, Pope Pius VII finally restored the Jesuit Order in 1814, although they remained a problematic factor for many outsiders in church politics, particularly those opposed to the Catholic Church. In 1848, for instance, they were banished from Switzerland for political reasons (conflict with Rome), and allowed back to that country only in 1973.
Segesser, a Swiss-German Jesuit Missionary

The following represents the first comprehensive English translation of the letters written by the Jesuit missionary Father Philipp Segesser (1689-1762) since his youth as a novice in a Jesuit school (Novitiate) in southern Germany addressing his family back home in Switzerland until his old age shortly before his death in 1762 in Sonora, today northern Mexico. Although practically forgotten today in his home town of Lucerne, or rather, waiting to be rediscovered, and although modern-day research on the history of the Jesuits globally and in the Americas especially has mostly passed over this Swiss Jesuit, Segesser proves to be a highly important contributor to the early history of both states, Sonora and Arizona. He was one of many other Jesuit missionaries in that wide open semi-arid region, a strong percentage of whom had come from German speaking lands to that remote part of the world as a result of a powerful deep inner calling. Segesser was not only a missionary, but also, by almost simple default, a farmer, a scientist, a builder, and a writer, which means that his reflections, observations, and ideas can be very relevant for many different interests and research agendas. The Jesuits’ great success was directly connected with their pragmatic approach in establishing ‘missions,’ centers of religious teaching, but basically ordinary settlements with an extensive agricultural system. Here we present, in English, the extensive corpus of his correspondence with the various family members back home in Switzerland, in which he provides us with a plethora of valuable, insightful, but also quirky and curious information about the world of Jesuit missions in the eighteenth century above all, not to mention the years that he had to wait in Spain for a possibility to cross the Atlantic. Whereas most other Jesuit missionaries composed primarily official letters, scientific journals, encyclopedias, etc., Segesser wrote, above all, personal letters to his family back in Lucerne, Switzerland.

He composed most of these letters in German, but some also in Latin, depending on the addressee. Occasionally he also used some Spanish phrases, more often Latin sentences, but in his German he also allowed a number of terms to creep in that were typical of the region where he grew up, in the Canton of Lucerne. From this perspective alone these epistolary texts also offer fascinating material of eighteenth-century German ‘literature’ in the Southwest of the United States and in the northern part of Mexico. Segesser was a man who crossed many boundaries in physical, cultural, and linguistic terms, as his letters clearly indicate. These present to us an individual with a global perspective already at that time, deeply religious, yet highly realistic and pragmatic as well, and profoundly dedicated to his cause, missionizing ‘heathens’ in the distant world, all waiting, as he believed, to be saved for the Christian faith.

This project started many years ago when I first developed an interest in the history of the Jesuits in the present Southwest of the United States, today comprising the State of Arizona and the Mexican State of Sonora. In the course of time I discovered that many of the Fathers, or missionaries, were of German descent (modern-day Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Croatia, Northern Italy, etc.) and had left behind extensive reports, treatises, journals, encyclopedias, and letters. This huge corpus of texts allowed me to pursue intensively and extraordinarily interdisciplinary approaches, linking German Studies with Anthropology, Religious Studies, and Linguistics, not to mention Geography, History, and Political Sciences. Subsequently I developed course material for a seminar that I offered as part of our undergraduate curriculum at
the University of Arizona in the Department of German Studies. Most of the materials are now available electronically on my webpage at the following URL: http://www.gened.arizona.edu/aclassen/sonora.htm.

In 2007 the Office of Ethnographic Research at the Arizona State Museum located on the campus and being part of The University of Arizona, under the directorship of Dr. Diana Hadley, approached me regarding a grant application to secure funds to translate the letters by Segesser. These are available in the collection as photo negatives and as photocopies, many of which are very difficult to read. Several years ago Mr. Heiko Schmuck, a German Ph.D. student, managed, however, to transcribe the letters, basing his subsequent doctoral dissertation on these and many other documents. It had always been a great concern since the early 1970s by the former director of the Arizona State Museum, Dr. Raymond H. Thompson, to get these letters also translated into English, but the difficulties were almost insurmountable for him, and this for decades, although Segesser was as important, if not even more relevant for the entire development of the Jesuit missions, as many of his fellow Jesuit brothers. When I taught my course on the German Jesuits once again in Spring of 2008, I also tried to incorporate some of the letters by Segesser into my reading list, but the texts at that time proved to be too complex even for my best students. I myself faced serious problems because of the highly idiosyncratic expressions, syntax, and idiomatic formulations, and dialect forms (Swiss). Nevertheless, we tried our hands on them from time to time, until at the end of the seminar a group of volunteers and I decided to accept the challenge and to translate the entire corpus outside of our class time with the aim to create a book publication.

In the Fall of 2008 our team, consisting of by then six undergraduate and one graduate students—the latter had just had completed the same course as an undergraduate and then had joined our graduate program—regularly met and worked at familiarizing ourselves with Segesser’s language. By the end of the year we embarked on our project more consistently, and by the end of the Spring semester 2009 we had achieved our goal, at least preliminarily. Most of the translations had by then already been revised, though much still needed to be done. In the meantime I had received a fellowship from the Swiss National Fond for the Support of Scientific Reserach (Schweizerischer Nationalfonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung/Swiss National Science Foundation) to do basic archival work in the State Archive in Lucerne (Staatsarchiv) where the original letters by Segesser and many other documents from him and many family members are housed. This fortunate development of events made it possible for me to work in Lucerne during the month of July 2009.

Only now, with the originals in front of me, could I finally enter the next, critical, stage, and revise and retranslate the entire corpus once again, drawing from our previous work. Needless to say, especially the long exposure to these letters while working with my team of students for almost a whole year was the basis upon which I could now tackle my task most efficiently while working in the archive in Lucerne with Segesser’s texts written by his own hand and having the relevant research tools immediately available, such as a comprehensive Swiss dictionary for earlier stages in the Swiss dialects. There is always a huge difference between the original and a photo or a photocopy, unless the former is digitized, allowing a much closer and more in-depth analysis than possible with the naked eye.

Up to that point, my team and myself had relied exclusively on Dr. Schmuck’s transcriptions, which proved to be, though not always perfect, very reliable in most cases, as I could determine later while studying the originals in Lucerne. However, a careful comparison with these original letters still revealed the need to double-check everything and to examine closely what the authentic writing
might have been. The choice between an ‘m’ and an ‘n’ in words such as ‘nit’ (‘not,’ or perhaps ‘mit’=‘with’) makes a world of difference whether a sentence is put into the negative or not. Fortunately, Dr. Schmuck had a very good eye and was obviously well schooled in reading this old hand. Nevertheless, as anyone can tell who has ever worked with manuscripts from any period or culture, the potential for misreading is always enormous. In our case, however, the number of mistakes or errors was relatively minimal, as countless spot-checks confirmed. Still, my close reading at time required a different interpretation, or I had to realize that sometime a line or two had been skipped and were not contained in the transcription. A few times even short paragraphs were missing, which I could now supply when I went through the originals. Otherwise, Dr. Schmuck’s work deserves our admiration and respect because without his invaluable contribution we could not even have dared to begin our own project. With his permission (August 20, 2009), I have uploaded his entire text—here disregarding three letters that became known only at the end of our project, and also some corrections to the original based on my reading of the original letters—to my webpage at: http://aclassen.faculty.arizona.edu/transcription_letters_0.

Following I offer the English translation of Philipp Segesser’s letters, housed in the State Archive of Lucerne, that had been photographed sometime in the early 1970s. The translation was initially based on Dr. Schmuck’s mostly trustworthy transcription, but then also, and most significantly, on a thorough comparison with and study of the original documents. There appear to be some additional letters that could have been included, and the files of the original letters were not always in the best order. But this might have been the result of various copies, intermingled with the originals, apparently marked by a small cross on the top, although even that was not a reliable criteria. In other words, we might be able to expect some new discoveries in the future, especially because none of Segesser’s official letters to his superiors in Mexico, Rome, or Germany are included here (these are all in Latin). Altogether, the available documents, now rendered into English, represent a very large large, though probably not complete percentage, of all the letters written by Segesser to his family and provide an excellent insight into this extraordinary missionary’s life, his mentality, ideals, and personal experiences.

His letters shed light on many different aspects of everyday life in the mission and of the culture of the Indian tribes; hence they should be of relevance for a variety of general and cultural historians. He addresses the history of Lucerne, specifically of his own extensive family; the history of the Jesuit Order, the history of Jesuit missionary activities; the history of European travel in the eighteenth century; the history of the traffic and mailing between Spain and the New World; the history of the Jesuit missions in the New World; the relationship between the Jesuit missionaries and the indigenous Indian population in Sonora, or Pimería Alta; and, finally, the history of mentality that determined the highly motivated group of Jesuit missionaries to abandon home and fatherland to go into completely foreign lands to reach out to the native populations, to teach them basic agriculture, and then, of course, the Christian religion.

Moreover, Segesser often reflects upon the relationship between Spaniards and German speakers in Spain and in Mexico, which tended to be rather tense and was determined by mutual mistrust, if not even contempt. He illustrates in a very lively manner how a white man could establish and maintain large missions, i.e., basically farms with churches (conventos), in the semi-arid climate of the Sonoran desert, intensively interacting with the native peoples, some of whom accepted him peacefully, others, such as the Apaches and Seris, not at all, who were actually bent
on destroying all missions within their reach and killing all white people, including the Jesuits. Segesser comments on this most dramatically in some of his last letters. Overall, his correspondence dramatically introduces us to ordinary aspects of the day-to-day living conditions on a mission and of the missionary’s experiences in his dealings with the native population.

Many of his letters talk about the fauna and flora of the Pimería Alta, not to forget the climate, the geology, hence mining, trade, and agriculture. Segesser continuously discusses the various options available to him to send and receive letters from home, to ship trunks and chests to his family and to receive goods from them as requested by him (seeds, tools, religious images, weapons, etc.). He also indicates the growing tensions between the Jesuits and the Catholic Church in the 1750s, and offers intriguing explanations why his own mission and many others dramatically declined and then actually failed at the end of his life in 1762, just five years before the global ban of the Jesuit Order in 1767 came down on them all.

Although fragmentary and often rather idiosyncratic in the writing style, this corpus of letters proves to be highly interesting and revealing for anyone studying the history of the Jesuit Order in the New World and the impact which the German speaking missionaries particularly had on the people and the environment in the Sonoran desert. As the numerous contemporary copies of individual letters indicate, and so even a particular collection of letters that he had composed between 1729 and 1738 and that some family member had copied separately, Segesser’s contributions as a Jesuit missionary were regarded with great respect, at least among his family and friends. Segesser emerges as a significant eye-witness testimony for the history of Lucerne, Switzerland, Spain, Mexico, and Sonora during the eighteenth century, so these letters are extraordinary documents of intercultural, religious, economic, and personal relations that spanned the globe. His letters also provide us with excellent insight into the mind-set of a young, deeply spiritual and yet also very practical Swiss man who was born into an extensive, highly influential, and wealthy patrician family in Lucerne, and became very religious himself, finally even joining the Jesuit Order with the ultimate purpose to serve God as a missionary in the New World.

His polite, often rather submissive, rhetoric is sometimes hard to swallow for a modern reader, especially because of his excessive use of intensive expressions of his humbleness, love for, and devotion to his family. His letters written as a novice in the Jesuit Order are of course deeply tinged by Jesuit idealism and religious values; hence at times difficult to read for people who live in the vastly secularized world of the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, we can clearly observe how he was developing as a writer when we first study his letters composed in his early years while he was still in the Jesuit Novitiate and College, and subsequently turn to those that he wrote from America and specifically those shortly before his death in Sonora.

Whatever we might think about the Jesuits and their missionary activities in general terms (see above), we can only pay our respect to the enormous motivation that inspired this young man, like many of his contemporary missionary confreres, and to his relentless devotion to teaching and preaching to the Indians, and to convert them to Christianity, when possible. In many respects, Philipp Segesser was a worthy follower of and an impressive successor to the famous first missionary in the Pimería Alta, Padre Eusebio Francisco Kino (1645-1711). He displayed considerable sensitivities toward the foreign cultures, and worked rather carefully and intelligently with the various Indians without excessively forcing his belief on them because he fully understood
the profound challenges for one white Jesuit missionary living alone on his station, perhaps three to four days away from the next mission, surrounded also by hostile Apaches and Seris, not to mention the rough climate and living conditions in the Sonoran Desert.

Segesser was only one of many missionaries in a global organization, the Jesuits, originally founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1540. Although forbidden and destroyed in 1776 for a host of different political, economic, and religious reasons (see above), the Jesuit Order had a huge impact on early modern history worldwide, and they were as important in religious and missionary terms as in the field of sciences (mathematics, astronomy, geography, and cartography). It is not surprising then that they have increasingly attracted the interest of the international scholarly community. But the Jesuit history is also the early history of Sonora and Arizona, for instance, which makes Segesser’s letters even more interesting and relevant for us, and in this regard also for the public, which has motivated us even further to translate his correspondence into English despite the enormous challenges in coping with his language, handwriting, and with the access to the original texts.

Finally, we should also not forget that Segesser was the recipient of three major Indian hide paintings, which he sent to his uncle in Lucerne sometime in 1760. The Frankfurt scholar Dr. Wolfgang Lindig reports in a letter from July 30, 1973, to a member of the Segesser family that he had seen those on Castle Heidegg, although they had already been readied for shipping, obviously to Santa Fe, NM, where they are still on display today in the Government’s Palace. The Museum of New Mexico legally acquired these hide paintings on October 31, 1988, which represent some of the most important eighteenth-century visual works produced by native artists on the North American continent and might have been produced by Tomás Jirón de Tejeda and his son Nicolás, who arrived in New Mexico from Mexico City in 1693. Nicolás died already in 1722, and his father died in 1736, so both could well have been witnesses of the battle depicted on one of the hides. This battle was “fought in 1720 between Spaniards and their Pueblo Indian allies against Pawnee and Oto Indians and their French allies at the confluence of the Loup and Platte rivers in today’s Nebraska.” The artists also could have heard of the events and then created the hide paintings upon oral instructions. The Spaniards, under the leadership of Pedro de Villasur, suffered a terrible defeat, with Villasur and most of his men being killed at the surprise attack by the Pawnees and Otos early in the morning when the camp was still asleep. The second painting depicts a battle between perhaps Apaches defending their palisaded village against mounted warriors, perhaps Mexican Indian militias.

A few words on the translation itself would be appropriate here as well: Whenever it seemed helpful or necessary to add a word for clarification, or if a word needed some elaboration, I added those in square brackets. Sometimes specific names of local products or recipes could not be translated, which is indicated by question marks, also in square brackets. Round brackets are copied from Segesser’s own text. Phrases in Spanish and Latin (once even in French) are kept in the original, typed in italics, then followed by the translation in square brackets. The translation stays as close as possible to the original, but numerous times in the English a different syntax had to be used to make sense out of the author’s writing.

I have not streamlined the spelling of names and replicate them as they appear in Segesser’s texts. This means that we find a variety of spellings for his own name, and some of those pertaining
to his relatives. We notice, in particular, the influence of Spanish in this case. In the State Archive of Lucerne a modern German transcription of some of Segesser’s letters is available, which also strives to explain and simplify the text as much as possible, hence quickly moves from the first level to the next, at times dangerously prejudging and hence denying us the possibility to gain immediate access to the original because it is already transformed. Undoubtedly, this is a very useful contribution by itself, but it also represents a somewhat complex and even problematic merging of both dimensions, whereas we really would have to keep separate the straightforward transcription and the translation, and this very strictly and clearly, particularly for the purpose of our translation into English.\textsuperscript{38}

We have to keep in mind that these are personal letters, quickly written, not revised, and often marred by ellipsis, incomplete sentence structures, illogical thought patterns, and other stylistic and compositional problems, for which he apologizes at times himself because of his constant lack of time and the need to send off a letter quickly, especially when he lived in the New World. Segesser was not necessarily a great author in literary terms, or highly prolific and polished as some of his younger contemporaries in the missionary organization, such as Joseph Och (1725-1773)\textsuperscript{39} and Ignaz Pfefferkorn (1725-after 1795),\textsuperscript{40} not to speak of the famous Eusebio Kino.\textsuperscript{41} Instead he can be identified as a pragmatic writer who utilized any free moment or occasion, especially when he already lived and worked in his mission, which makes his letters, however, deeply authentic, and often rather moving.

Once again, but more specific to the point, both the syntax and the orthography prove to be rather unsystematic and unorthodox, at times making the translation, whether into modern German or English, almost to a guessing game. Lucerne represents one of those Swiss Cantons where the Swiss dialects takes on very distinctive features, and today a modern German speaker can have great difficulties understanding the spoken language in Lucerne. Of course, in writing this has always been a somewhat different matter, and yet, some of the challenges that Segesser’s letters pose are directly linked to his linguistic origins.\textsuperscript{42}

I have always indicated with question marks in square brackets where I faced difficulties and could not solve those satisfactorily. The reader may keep in mind that there are numerous terms used by Segesser that are neither listed in the relevant Swiss dictionaries or other reference works, nor are also recognizable by citizens of Lucerne today, as I had to realize to my great disappointment. But in most such cases we are dealing with highly specialized vocabulary, sometimes idiomatic phrases, or terms only used within the Segesser family or among the Jesuits. Fortunately, Dr. Lindig offered a number of helpful suggestions in his own transcription, at least in German, which still does not make the translation much easier.

Segesser was very conscious about the need to save paper and hence mailing costs, so he wrote his letters without any breaks, paragraphs, indentations, etc. For the purpose to make the reading of the English translation somewhat easier, I have added those where it seemed to fit best. The reader can always orientate him/herself according to the references to the negative numbers (in bold) which signal the end of a page. Further, each letter is identified according to the file name in the State Archive of Lucerne, and then by the number assigned to it by a pencil mark. Some files, however, did not have such marks, which required an ad-hoc counting system.
Let us also take a quick look at the history of the Jesuits in Lucerne and their formative influence on Joseph Segesser, which ultimately motivated him to travel to the New World and to live and die there as a missionary. After the foundation of the Jesuit Order by the Basque Ignatius of Loyola in 1540, which was approved by Pope Paul III, it took several decades until Jesuits also found their way to Lucerne, whose primary purpose it was everywhere in the Catholic parts of Switzerland to reform the educational system and to improve the ministry in every respect. This was very much in line with the universal ideals pursued by the Jesuits: to educate, to missionize, and to strengthen the Christian faith. In the central region of Switzerland the Protestant Reformation did not have the same effect as in other areas and Cantons, which triggered an intensive debate about the inner reform of the Catholic Church.

The public consensus was that the school system had to be improved, above all, because there were just not enough schools available, which forced the young people to look for alternatives which they mostly found in Protestant areas where they were hence exposed, by default, to Protestant ideas and values. For a long time the debate centered on the question where the planned college was to be set up, whether in Rapperswil or Locarno. Then, however, members of the Lucerne city council followed up on the decision by the Constance Synod of Bishops in 1567 that a Swiss school had to be created under the leadership of the Jesuits. In 1570 the Milan Bishop Carlo Borromeo visited Switzerland, and so Lucerne as well, which he explicitly favored as the site for a central college for Catholic school children and students from the entire region.

The Jesuits had gained international attention and great respect with regard to their approach to education once they had founded their first school in Messina, Italy, in 1548, which focused on Latin, Greek, and Humanism at large. Most significantly, their schools did not charge any tuition, and the Jesuits were the first to have specific faculty for individual subject matters, which greatly intensified the educational quality.

Perhaps a little surprising, at first the Jesuit leadership was rather critical of the idea to open a school in Switzerland because of a lack of qualified teachers and uncertainties about the seriousness of the proposal. But upon the resolute initiative of the Lucerne mayor Ludwig Pfyffer and the intervention at the Holy See via the Captain of the Swiss Guards there, Jost Segesser (!), two Jesuit fathers and a Jesuit lay brother arrived in the town on August 7, 1574. In 1577 the city government signed a contract with the Jesuits regarding the establishment of a school and the housing of twenty Jesuits. In 1577 the school opened its doors, and successively new levels of teaching were instituted as soon as the necessary rooms had become available. In 1643 it had become even possible to study philosophy with the Jesuits on the university level for a sequence of three years. In 1654 Saint Francis Xavier was announced as the city’s and the Canton’s patron.

Between 1650 and 1700 the Gymnasium and the Lyzeum in Lucerne had ca. 350 and 400 students from all over Catholic Switzerland. Between 1666 and 1669 the first phase in the erection of the Jesuit church was completed. For a long time the Jesuits enjoyed great support in the lay community, as documented, for instance, by large financial donations. During the Thirty-Year War, the citizens of Lucerne were more than eager to welcome Jesuit refugees from Germany in their houses. But already by the early eighteenth century the Jesuits faced numerous political and economic difficulties, particularly because the city council proved to be receptive to new philosophical and religious ideas (Jansenism, Enlightenment). The Jesuits often mishandled their
finances and got into conflicts with the secular authorities. But shortly after the global ban of the Jesuit Order in 1767, the Jesuits in Lucerne experienced the same destiny in 1773, although the remaining teachers were allowed to continue with their work as diocesan priests and teachers until their death.  

Philipp Segesser was one of at least eight other Swiss Jesuit missionaries abroad who had been born in Lucerne, and one of twelve who had attended the local Jesuit Gymnasium. These were, for instance, Father Balthasar and Father Stiger from Kobelwald in the Canton Sankt Gallen, both of whom Segesser mentions often in his correspondence. Walter Ignaz Sonnenberg, also from Lucerne, travelled to the Philippines via Mexico, and later ended up in China. In other words, Lucerne and Switzerland at large were very active recruiting grounds for the Jesuit missionary activities. Switzerland was part of the so-called Upper (or Southern) German Province of the Jesuit Order, which included most Swiss Cantons, the dukedom of Basel, the bishopric principalities of Chur, Brixen, and Trento, the Hapsburgian Upper Austria (including North and South Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and Vorlande), Swabia and Bavaria (excluding Passau), and the bishopric principality of Eichstätt in southern Bavaria. If we take a close look at some of the early letters that Segesser sent to his family back home, we easily recognize the deeply religious tone of voice and the high level of emotional bonding, despite, or just because of, all rhetorical phrases of submission, humbleness, and devotion to the Highly Honorable and Highly Noble Juncker Father, Brother, Uncle, or, above all, the Highly Honorable or most beloved Honorable Mother, etc.
Brief Biography of Philipp Segesser JS

Philipp Segesser has been discussed by a number of historians, both in the late nineteenth and also in the late twentieth and twenty-first century (Philipp Anton von Segesser, Hausberger, Schmuck, etc.). Heiko Schmuck even published a book-length biography, to which we must refer here above all with great respect. But for our purpose, a brief biographical outline, specifically for an English-speaking audience, basically a summary of Schmuck’s findings, seems more than appropriate. I began this introduction with a short outline of his life, whereas here I am going into the full range of details.

Segesser’s father, Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II, was born on July 13, 1662, into a very old Lucerne family, and he seems to have toyed with the idea of joining the Jesuits from early on, although he received his education in the local Jesuit school and then in Landsberg, which could have been the preparatory step to enter the Order. This did not happen for a number of reasons, and instead he pursued the career of an administrator in his home city and at various places in the Canton of Lucerne. His son Philipp followed his father’s initial footsteps and then followed through with turning into a Jesuit, as we will see later. His father, Segesser II, married the noblewoman Anna Maria Catharina Rusconi (b. April 2, 1670) on January 28, 1686. They had seventeen children, nine girls and eight boys, of whom seven altogether died before they had even reached the age of one year, which was not untypical for that time.49 Jost Ludwig Segesser (b. July 10, 1701) drowned in the river Reuß that runs through Lucerne in 1707. The oldest child, Anna Elisabeth, was born on February 7, 1687, and joined the Benedictine convent Hermetschwil in Aargau in 1705. She died in 1755. Jost Ranutius III was born on April 4, 1688, and entered the clerical ranks as well, serving as chaplain at a number of churches in the Canton of Lucerne, joining the Canons at St. Michael in Beromünster in 1732. He died in 1740. Maria Francisca Hortensia was born on August 8, 1696, joined the Cistercian convent of Rathausen near Lucerne, taking the vow in 1713. The father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser died sometime in February 1728, whereas the mother Maria Catharina died on September 11, 1749.

Most important, though, Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser, with whom Philipp corresponded the most throughout his life and whom he appears to have trusted deeply, was born on November 21, 1698, and pursued a secular career in Lucerne. He assumed the role of the paterfamilias, as the head of the Segesser dynasty, so to speak, enjoying not only great respect within his own family, but also in the larger urban community. The best expression of that was his election as city mayor (“Schultheiß) in 1759, which also included the governance of the entire Canton Lucerne. Most of Philipp’s letters are addressed to Ulrich Franz Joseph. The latter died in 1767, having created thirteen children, five of whom joined the Church.

Philipp Anton Segesser von Brunegg, our Jesuit missionary father, was born on September 1, 1689, in Lucerne. Sometime between 1697 and 1700 he entered the Jesuit College, the most important school in the city. Between 1698 and 1704 he lived separated from his parents and the younger siblings because the father held the position of city clerk in Willisau in the western part of the Canton Lucerne, and for that reason had to have his residence there as well. In October 1705 or 1706 Philipp completed his school years at the College and moved to the Lyzeum, where he studied the Studia superiora, focusing on philosophy, theology, logic, physics, mathematics, metaphysics, and
ethics. On October 15, 1708, Philipp completed these subject matters and probably moved to the Jesuit school in Landsberg am Lech in Bavaria to begin with his novitiate in preparation of joining the Jesuit Order, finishing that in 1710, making his four vows (profession) as the precondition for being allowed to enter the missionary organization.\(^{50}\)

Subsequently he was required to work as a teacher in the Jesuit Upper German province for several years. In 1713 Philipp officially renounced all his inheritance and pledged to live in poverty according to the Jesuit ideals as outlined originally by Ignatius of Loyola. Since 1717 he seems to have continued with his theological studies at the Jesuit College in Ingolstadt, which was the oldest Jesuit institution in Bavaria, founded in 1556. This was also the College where Eusebio Kino had taught before he had decided to enter the mission abroad. In 1717 Philipp was officially accepted into the Jesuit Order, and in the same year he wrote a letter to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini requesting to be selected for missionary work.

In 1721 Philipp completed his studies and prepared himself for the ordination as priest, which happened, as we can assume, in Eichstätt. On June 8 of that year he read his first mass. On September 16, 1721, he went to Altötting, a famous pilgrimage site with a Jesuit College, to teach (the catechism to small children, for instance), and the following year he transferred to Straubing, again for teaching purposes. In 1726 we find him in Neuburg an der Donau, where he pronounced his \textit{professio quatuor votorum}, committing himself for the rest of his life to the Jesuit Order.\(^{51}\) The following year he left Neuburg and visited his family in Switzerland again. In 1727 he began with his work as people’s missionary in the district of Ellwangen an der Jagst near Dillingen, constantly traveling around from village to village to see sick and dying people, to offer Masses, and to give religious classes to children.

In April 1729, at the age of forty, he finally received the news that he was accepted for the mission abroad in New Spain. He arrived in Munich the next month, where he met the Swiss Jesuit Caspar Stiger\(^{52}\) and other missionaries who were to accompany him on his journey to the New World. On June 7, Segesser arrived in Genoa, and on August 3 in Cadiz. Unfortunately, there he and the other missionaries had to wait for some of their delayed Jesuit brethren, so the departure of the Spanish fleet could not be postponed any longer and left for America, to the missionaries’ great disappointment. Instead, they went to Sevilla two days later, but they had to wait a good year before they could leave again at the end of May 1730, but only to be stuck once more in Cadiz, or rather El Puerto de Santa María. Finally, after the intervention of the Spanish king, the preparations for the crossing of the Atlantic turned serious, and the missionaries were all subjected to the required inspection on October 25, 1730. On November 16, 1730, the fleet set sail, taking all the missionaries with them. Segesser was never to return to Europe.

The ships arrived at Bahía de Ocoa on Santo Domingo on December 30, 1730, and continued on January 4, 1731 with the destination La Havana on Cuba, reaching Cabo San Antonio on January 17, and subsequently La Havana. From there they continued on April 4, 1731, arriving in Veracruz on April 19. The next month Segesser and his confreres (fellow fathers, or missionaries) established the pilgrimage site Guadalupe northeast of Mexico City. On June 17, 1731, they continued with their journey direction north, arriving in Durango on July 19, and arrived, finally, in Sonora early October, and in San Xavier del Bac, south of Tucson, on May 7 or 8, 1732.

The further details are reflected in Segesser’s numerous letters, and have also been studied by the various biographers (see above). For almost thirty years Father Philipp Segesser SJ lived and worked as a missionary in the Pimería Alta. In 1734, while in Guevavi, he became sick and left for Cucurpé for his recovery. I suspect that he had contracted ‘valley fever,’ but details escape us. In
1737 we find him in San Francisco de Borja de Tecoripa, where he rose to the rank of Rector of the Jesuit school in 1739. In 1748 was transferred to Ures, where he gradually rose up through the various ranks from Superior to Visitator (1751), and Missionary Superior (1755). In the years 1739/1740, 1748/1749, 1754/1755, and 1762 he held the position of Rector of his respective missionary district, and from 1750 to 1754 he was appointed as Visitator of Sonora. In 1758 he even served as the testamentary executor of the late Governor Juan de Mendoza who had been killed by the Seris. Segesser died on September 28, 1762, in Ures, just five years before the global ban on the Jesuit Order came down on them all in 1767. So, Segesser was spared the worst development soon to affect the missionaries, although his own situation looked rather grim because of the constant attacks by the Seris and the Apaches, drastically decimating his mission, even depriving him of basic foodstuff.
Philipp Segesser’s Report about Sonora

The conservative, at his time rather famous, Lucerne historian, politician, and author of numerous treatises and books, such as his *Rechtsgeschichte der Stadt und Republik Luzern* (1850-1858), Philipp A. von Segesser (1817-1888), already published, in 1886, a most valuable, but today virtually forgotten account about Sonora by his Jesuit ancestor. At first he introduces the world of Sonora in geographic and historical terms, then he discusses the significant role of the Jesuits, who were basically the only ones who dared to enter this forlorn, tough and rugged terrain, and then introduces the correspondence by Philipp Segesser from 1719 to 1761. He must have obviously studied those letters in some detail, since he draws his information directly from Philipp’s own statements. But his focus rests on Segesser’s extensive report about Sonora completed on July 31, 1737, which he reproduces, as he claims, faithfully, though modernized in the language to make it more understandable for the modern reader.

In 1945, Theodore E. Treutlein translated Segesser’s account once again, but he based it on “camera negatives secured by the translator in Bonn am Rhine in 1933. There, in the Jesuit college library, through the kindness of the Jesuit historian, Father Alfons Väth, he was permitted to photograph a number of items, of which the Segesser relation was one.” A copy, perhaps, however, the original, is housed today also in the State Archive of Lucerne (PA 437/590). This report proves to be of great relevance for the history and anthropology of the Southwest, but it also underscores the considerable work produced by Segesser whom we thus cannot only identify as a remarkable composer of letters, but also as a critical author of a more or less scientific work. But even here, Segesser openly admits his difficulties to write in a polished and accurate German: “I close this report with the plea that whoever takes the time to read these hurriedly written lines will forgive my errors and the confusion of this simple presentation. I have in truth almost forgotten my mother tongue, since no one here reminds me of it. I hope one will be satisfied with my simple report about this country and its inhabitants, a report which upon request of my right reverend uncle, the choirmaster and custodian, Segesser von Brunegg at Münster, I could not refrain from writing.”

This report has also been translated into Spanish, confirming its great informational value for the history, anthropology, and geography of the Sonoran desert. But we should also not forget the considerable significance of Segesser’s contribution to the history of eighteenth-century German literature, in this case intimately connected with the world of Sonora and the Pimería Alta. In this regard he was not the only one, and others in fact have overshadowed his work quite a bit, but the reason for this phenomenon has simply been the inaccessibility of his letters and the report, even though the latter is available in English translation. There is no doubt that both Segesser and many of the other German-speaking Jesuit missionaries offer astounding insights into cross- and trans-cultural experiences in a borderland.

Finally, Segesser also created a map of his province in 1761, which he handed over to the new governor of Sonora and Sinaloa, José de Tienda y Cuervo, who had it shipped to Mexico City. Not content with the quality, however, he expressed his desire for an improved map, which then was produced by Father Johann Neuntuig together with Father Bernhard Middendorff.
Acknowledgment

The idea to translate Philipp Segesser’s letters into English was originally conceived by Dr. Raymond H. Thompson, former director of the Arizona State Museum, Tucson. He is to be credited with his foresight regarding the importance of these letters and related material relevant for the history of the (German) Jesuit missionaries in Sonora in the eighteenth century. Thanks to his efforts, which were supported by a grant to the Arizona State Museum by Mrs. Byron Ivancovich, photo negatives of Segesser’s letters, now held in the Lucerne State Archive, could be secured. When Dr. Thompson first approached me in the mid 1990s regarding the task of translating Segesser’s documents, I had to decline because of the profound difficulties with Segesser’s old handwriting. But his idea carried on, and fortunately, several years later the young German scholar Heiko Schmuck came to Tucson and transcribed these letters as part of his work for a doctoral dissertation on Segesser, which he then submitted to the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany, in the winter semester of 2003/2004, and published in 2004. Thanks to Dr. Diana Hadley, the present director of the Office of Ethnohistorical Research at the Arizona State Museum, a grant from the Southwestern Foundation for Education and Historical Preservation was secured in 2007 to have these letters translated into English. Dr. Michael Brescia was instrumental in facilitating contacts and getting this project under way. I owe my gratitude to all of them for their interest and support.

My undergraduate students in a seminar on “Crossing Borders” in the Department of German Studies at the University of Arizona (Spring 2008) eagerly responded to the materials by the German speaking missionaries in the Pimería Alta, and the following seven students subsequently joined my efforts to try to translate the complete set of letters into English, and this on a voluntary basis: Chris Floess, Jere Freeh, Lee Gagum, Ivan Grubisic, Emily Moore, Patrick Carlson, and Matei Tichindelean. I am very thankful for their highly assiduous efforts and endless hours of struggling through Segesser’s really difficult, often faulty and cumbersome eighteenth-century Swiss-German. Their technical know-how in setting up a website with all the translations for the purpose of revising the texts (among themselves) was highly impressive. They were, indeed, the driving force, and without their help I would not have taken up and pursued the considerable challenge of rendering these letters into English. Although I have done a fare share of translations from Middle High and Early New High German texts into modern German and English, Segesser’s letters posed the greatest difficulties I have ever faced in this regard. I am glad that my students then could even be employed by the Arizona State Museum in the Spring of 2009 to create the first rough version of the translation of all letters written in German. The graduate student Jeremy Miranda later assisted us in translating the few letters written in Latin, for which I owe him my gratitude. However, this is a Latin that often defies a simple translation and contains numerous linguistic hurdles, so these letters do not read as smoothly as the rest of the text, originally composed in German. I am also very appreciative of the help that I received from my colleague, Professor Cynthia White, Department of Classics, University of Arizona, in addressing some of these challenges, though all remaining mistakes are mine, of course.

I greatly appreciate having received a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation that allowed me to spend several weeks in Lucerne in the Summer of 2009, working with the original documents in the State Archive there, on the basis of which I produced the present translation in
close consultation with the transcript and the translated texts produced by my team up to that point. My colleague, Professor Markus Ries, Department of Theology, Universität Luzern (Lucerne), was instrumental in securing that grant and welcomed me as a guest to his university, and I am most thankful for his essential help and assistance in this regard. Last not the least, the Swiss Consulate in Los Angeles assisted me in making the initial contacts with the Foundation. I am also very appreciative of the help that I received from some of the archivists in the State Archive in Lucerne who were always willing to answer some of my torturous questions regarding difficult words or passages, although most of the most challenging ones remained linguistic mysteries.

My wife Carolyn was the first modern reader of this English translation, and I am very thankful for her critical comments and sharp eyes. Father Vincent T. Freeh, MSC (member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart), uncle of my student collaborator Jere Freeh, was so kind enough to read the manuscript as well and to provide some valuable feedback. I am also most grateful to (Rev.) Professor John W. Witek, S.J., Georgetown University, for a careful examination of the manuscript and for offering corrections and suggestions for improvements, especially pertaining to some of the religious expressions. Moreover, I am indebted to Professor Werner Zimmt, University of Arizona (and Arizona State Museum), for his invaluable contributions to the fine-tuning of the manuscript. He helped me in the last round to clear up some difficult passages, and alerted me to errors and misunderstandings. Dr. Raymond Thompson, the former director of the Arizona State Museum, was so kind to read the entire manuscript and to make some additional and very illuminating suggestions regarding some terms. Dr. Diana Hadley and Dr. Michael M. Brescia, both Associate Curators, Ethnohistory: Arizona State Museum, were enormously helpful at the various stages of the entire project and in steering the manuscript to the final production/publication stage, at least now online (April 17, 2011).
Texts

Each text is identified by the number of the photo negative (and photocopy), all of which today housed in the collection of the Office of Ethnohistorical Research at the Arizona State Museum, ASM (and also in the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, Colección Pimería Alta). The Negative numbers do not always follow a logical sequence for some unknown reasons, but the reader can easily identify the file with photocopies held in the collection, clearly subdivided by locations where Segesser wrote his letters (the photo negatives are held in the archive). Moreover, every individual document is further identified by date. The translation has always been carefully compared with the original letters in the Lucerne State Archive, Switzerland, as indicated by the call number of the respective file with the original text, which is followed by the number of the specific letter kept in that file. This can be a little tricky at times because the files also contain copies of some letters, at times also unidentifiable loose leaves. Despite the best efforts by the archivists both in Lucerne and in Tucson, a number of questions as to the availability of truly all letters could not be answered to my full satisfaction. The original letters are loosely stored in folders without any system to guarantee the precise and historically correct sequence. And the photo negatives in Tucson are arranged by a somewhat quirky numbering sequence. Nevertheless, what we have available still today and what I have translated below presents the most extensive corpus of Segesser letters still available today.

We should also keep in mind that the mailing system between Mexico and Switzerland during the eighteenth century was fraught with countless problems, ranging from individual carelessness to shipwrecks, pirates, and fires, and then to any number of accidents that might have destroyed whole boxes or chests with letters and other items. But once Segesser’s letters had arrived safely, despite all difficulties in delivery, they were copied, handed around, causing a considerable degree of damage to the flimsy paper. The reader must keep all these problems in mind to judge the true value of the surviving records that follow below, now for the first time in English translation.
Ingolstadt

Ingolstadt, situated northwest of Munich in the present state of Bavaria, Germany, on the bank of the Danube river, enjoyed the status as a city since ca. 1250. A university was founded there in 1472, which was closed in 1800. After the Protestant Reformation, initiated in 1517 by Martin Luther, Ingolstadt became, under the leadership of Johann Eck, the central launching pad for the Catholic Counter-Reformation. The Jesuits were granted a faculty of their own in 1555. Already by the end of the sixteenth century the Jesuit order dominated this institution, but they could not hold on to it in the wake of the global ban of the Jesuit order in 1767, and then were gradually replaced by secular minded professors who increasingly advocated Enlightenment ideas. By 1799 the Bavarian Elector Maximilian IV announced that the financial burden of the university was too heavy for the crown, which forced its closure.64

Letter 1

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II.65 Ingolstadt, May 16, 1719 (Neg. 51758-51759)

Neg. ASM 51758
PA 437/585
No. 1

Highly Nobly Born Honorable Juncker Father,

I do not doubt that it will be possible for my highly honorable Juncker66 Father, and also Honorable Mother, after the pleasant and piously spent Holy Lent season, to enjoy a happier and festive Easter in the best of health, which would provides me with particular comfort. This would ease my worries, and I beg the dear God to grant me this solace for many years to come. However, since now the time is approaching when the trip to Sargans [is planned], I did not want to neglect dutifully to wish good luck to the honorable Juncker Father and Honorable Mother on this long and inopportune trip, and indeed I am doing this somewhat earlier because you will be occupied with much more important affairs, than reading my letter. The early time of my letter might make it possible for you, if you so desire, to write back to me. It is then my highest wish, desire, and yearning from the benevolent God that He sends to the highly honorable Juncker Father on this trip one such companion, like the one He sent to the disciple Tobias who took all of the worries upon himself, liberated him from all danger, insured him from all illnesses leading him there, where his desires took him, and after some time happily brought [him] back home to his fatherland.

This, as I say, I wish for my highly honorable Juncker Father and Honorable Mother as well as all the others who will be accompanying them, that it may work out for them, as it did for Tobias,
though this is in God’s hands. I will not neglect, living up to my obligation, to perform my daily small prayer with this end in mind, and appeal to your holy guardian angels that they assume the position of Saint Raphael, or an equal substitute. It follows on that trip in the next month the feast day of the Saint Henry which is the Saint’s Feast Day of my highly honorable Juncker Father, on which great day I am obliged to congratulate the highly honorable Juncker Fathers at this opportunity from the bottom of my heart (because it is uncertain whether I can come forward by that time with another letter).

May the great and generous Lord keep you healthy for many years to the advantage of the common weal, with comfort and in full friendships in the best health, luck, and with all blessings. I would but like to wish that I could presently come up with appropriate words and a Bindband, so that my intentions would be better recognized. However, because a religious man is not expected to have any other connections than spiritual ones, you should know how little I am really capable of doing in future years with my limited strength [as a cleric]. I offer what I can also this time, and plead that you look upon it amiably, and accept it with favorable grace. Until then I cannot do much more than to offer my Holy Masses, which the highly honorable Juncker Father may think about as he pleases. If you have the patience, more can be offered, such as more reports.

During Father Socius’ visit at the local College he told me that Rector Father Provincial and he himself had been invited by the highly honorable Juncker Fathers to visit him at his place if their route should take them to Sargans. This pleased him [the Provincial] very much, and he told me that if it would not be a great detour they would do this honor to the highly honorable Fathers and visit him at the castle and at least enjoy an afternoon or evening meal there.

Reverent Father Provincial said to me, though, that he would have to visit the Honorable Canon Reverend Choir Master in the cathedral, with whom he once had the honor of traveling to Landsberg. He would visit the Lord Prior there at any rate because he is his brother. Rector Father Preis, who is our Father Rector, as you already know, has gone on a trip to visit the Lower Rhine Province around the Lent season. How soon he will come back, we do not know. How gladly I would like to leave him to visit you, my highly honorable Juncker Father can deduce from the writings which I have already sent him. In the meantime, our new Reverend Father Rector is Father Maximilian Pistorini, who had previously been Father Rector in Augsburg.

What the highly honorable Juncker Father has in mind regarding the first Mass, I know well. But I would like to find out what he intends to do regarding the position of the county supervisor, if my most honorable father would not mind to reveal this to me in a letter, since it would serve me well, because one or another matter would have to be arranged accordingly. I would appreciate it if you could let me know to whom I should direct the letters, if I will write one, which is, however, really my obligation, so that you can surely receive them. The Lord Brother Franz Joseph will stay in Turin, as I hope, and will soon provide you and Honorable Sister with an answer to the letter that I had safely received the past Sunday. I also hope that Madmoiselle Sister will have joined the abbey in Rathausen.

Actually, I am convinced of that and pray to God that she will have the necessary strength to do so. There are no extraordinary news to report from here. The elector’s servants arrived here again yesterday and on Sunday after having returned from Hungary, and breathed some life into the city. Presently, everything in the countryside and in the gardens, blessed be the Lord, is in bloom; however, it is still relatively cool etc. Apart from my obligatory greeting to my highly honorable Honorable Mother, to my dearest siblings and all other family members I submit myself humbly to my Father’s, the highly honorable Juncker’s mercy.
Your most loyal Son Philip Segesser S.J.
Ingolstadt, May 16, 1719
Letter 2

Letter to his father Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, June 24, 1720 (Neg. 51760-61)

Neg. ASM 51760
PA 437/585
No. 2

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

Since the feast day of the holy and great Emperor Henry will arrive next month, which is my Highly Honorable Father’s feast day, I did not want to, and could not, neglect to observe my duty as your child to send my best greetings to my Highly Honorable Father, and to pray to God that He let my most beloved Juncker Father live not only one or two more years, but many years with great joy, comfort, and in pleasantry, and that you may afterwards enter the heavenly joys. In order to ensure the realization of these wishes not only by way of empty words, I will also do good deeds (if I may call them that), as I have done in the past, with this intention in mind and as to be understood by my highly honorable father. For that purpose I have already read six Masses (more than I could have hoped for). Similarly, such Masses have and will be read for my Honorable Mother, which I expect to report back to you in the future. I beg you to accept this spiritual gift most gracefully since the other siblings will provide better service [or gifts] more properly and dutifully. I do not doubt that you will spend the rest of the year in the same good health as during the first half. If I could be informed about that in some later letter, this would give me great comfort. I hope that the next year will bring as much good health, [Neg. 51761] so that people will want to experience similarly good years.

Since the last time when I had received a letter, which was written on February 14 by the Highly Honorable Juncker Father, I have already sent 3 letters, but I have not received an answer. Not that I was in dire need for a response, and it will be sufficient for me to know that the letters have arrived, but I do not want to be accused of any impoliteness. Allow me to express my most polite thanks for the gift that I have received on the occasion of the New Year, which will do me good already in this life. May the graceful Lord repay this generosity in eternity a thousand times to the Highly Honorable Juncker Father.

Aside from this, there is nothing new that comes to mind, except that we received news from Freiburg in Breisgau that the French continue to recruit many soldiers for a goal or end that is still unknown.70 We have heard from them that the current residents later sold Beündteüt [?]71 for a good price, because they have been ordered to do so by the French power and might because it was forbidden everywhere to ship anything from France into Switzerland. Whether this is still the case, I cannot imagine. The Swiss merchants in this country are also forbidden to sell anything on the markets, which they have obeyed, since they do not want to run the risk that everything would be taken away from them. This affects especially the fraudulent merchants72 about whom they say that they run a large business.
The weather is very nice and the past weeks have brought pleasant rain and beautiful weather. May God preserve everything with His divine blessing.

To my Most Highly Honorable Mother humble and filial regards, also friendly greetings to my honorable sisters. I entrust myself moreover to stay in the Father’s favor and mercy.

Ingolstadt, June 24, 1720
My highly Honorable Juncker Father’s
most loyal son,
Philipp Segesser S.J.
Letter 3

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, January 4th, 1721 (Neg. 51762-51763)

Neg. ASM 51762
PA 437/585
Nr. 3

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

It will be surprising for the highly honorable Juncker Father that I am bold enough to send you an open letter. Nevertheless, I cannot take the chance to request such a privilege [to send a sealed, i.e., private letter] from my superior out of worry that he would not send this letter for me. It is instead very understandable, because they do not like to see when someone is begging too much, and in truth I am also ashamed of myself; however, under the present circumstances I have the need for some fatherly help.

I humbly (as a child) wanted to ask the Highly Honorable Juncker Father if he could send me some money for my first Mass so that I could be considered equally worthy as everyone else. The highly honorable Juncker Father has, however, already sent me a gold coin a while back. Until the need might arise I have stored it with my superiors, as everybody else does, this sum alone will not be enough for me nor my colleagues, of whom there will be ten more who will read the first Mass with me, to invite them all to a dinner. What the highly honorable Juncker Father had given me already nothing is left because I had such a sneaky and greedy Rector who withheld the usual travel allowance and made us spend that money which was sent for the travels. What did the Reverend Father Provincial, that is, the current Father Rector, have to say about this? He was not pleased with it when he handed out the travel allowance as was usual with us. But he did not make any effort to reimburse me for the trip to Constance and brushed me aside requesting patience from me.

Now, if you would like to know what would be necessary for the first Mass, I will write it down candidly. Initially each of those who come from the Alps must pay four ducats for the costs that is three times the cost for a trip to Eichstätt, the honorarium for the auxiliary bishop, the meal for the Reverend Father Rector. In the case that one does not contribute [Neg. 51763] he will be viewed by his peers as surprisingly cheap. Otherwise it is the custom that the newly ordained priests give a gift to the altar boys, who are our only religious servants and therefore they expect more than one picture, for which I have de facto nothing else than a Binreal [?], which I had received at an equivalent opportunity when I had had the honor to provide the same service for him. But I will have to use it for my own purpose because I do not foresee any opportunity to receive another.

I really will need something, and who might it be to give it to me, if my Highly Honorable Juncker Father has no pity on me. There is no need to speak about a certain breviary, which the college gives us anyhow, but it is of the kind that would make one’s eyes shed tears. There is no solution because this is an older tradition, and he who wants a better one, must therefore see about
his money. I will accept, however, my ‘mother,’ what is the term for the breviary, patiently and use it.

Moreover, on that day I would like to have a memento from each one of you, even though the musicians always disrupt the silence. They would have the best memory of me if they could say about me that I am the young father, who had given them nothing. But where could this elaborate letter be going? Might it be that I have almost said, written and begged unashamedly? Could it be that my most Honorable Juncker father would send me as much money as is necessary to do all of this? No, this is far from me. It am ashamed to have given even an indication of my poverty. But this finds its clearest expression thereby.

If my most Honorable Juncker father, at his discretion, provided something in the meantime, depositing it with the Father Procurator of Lucerne or Feldkirch, or by some other preferred way, but not by way of the people, whom I entrust the safe delivery of this letter and who, throughout the year, travel throughout the province and also properly deliver lots of things, because it would come to me too late and wouldn’t find me until I arrive at Altöttingen. Should this beggary be too brazen and cheap for the Juncker Father and Honorable Mother, I will be just fine if you do not send me anything. So, may my most honorable Juncker Father handle this situation at his discretion, And certainly, I have no hope that Reverend Father Rector would send this letter out if it had ended up in his hands.

Even though they do not have anything against it when parents send something to their children they also don’t want it that we become excessive in beggary. Like the rule states, in beggary do not be immoderate. I would appreciate it if this letter would not get into any other hands but my parents’ own hands. My most Honorable Juncker Father, you will have probably received one or the other letter from me. Certainly an answer to the most beloved letter that you had written on December 3. Father, please forgive me. My filial faith has led me by the hand, indeed, even at the time when I was very busy (everything is up to me) preparing for the Promulgation [public announcement], in which Duke Theodor will be elected as a prefect, and consequently he studies here; for that reason the present letter has by necessity become so untidy and sloppy. I submit myself, apart from sending friendly greetings to my Highly Honorable Honorable Mother, in the Father’s mercy.

My Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s
most loyal son Philip [sic] Segesser
Ingolstadt, January 4, 1721
Letter 4

Letter to his Father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, January, 6th, 1721 (Neg. 51764-51765)

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

I received the comforting fatherly writing that was composed on December 2 from Magister Antonius Hüetlie on December 31; the date on which the Magister had received the letter was December 23. The letter was delivered from Ingolstadt via Feldkirch to here within a span of 8 days. Where it was delayed before, though, I would not speculate. I say my most obligatory thanks for such a great effort, by which my Highly Honorable Father chose to answer the filial letter. I would have almost put these lines of my response aside until today because the Recollection and the renewal of the priestly oaths that take place at the New Year would have hindered me. But since I have mentioned the New Year, I feel urged to interrupt this pressing business of mine for a small hour to wish from the bottom of my heart a festive continuation of this newly arrived year to my Highly Honorable, beloved parents. May the benevolent God make you happy and bless you with so many blessings as the paternal family would need to be embraced by honor and happiness, which will also strengthen God’s honor.

To be certain, I will not permit my love as your child to falter in this matter, and befitting my obligation I will appeal to God to let my Highly Honorable parents kindly know what will be beneficial for their soul and body. Should there be something in the future, which is within my powers, by which I can prove my responsibility as a your child, it will be my duty to carry out the endearing request as soon as possible.

Regarding the dispositions that have been organized before the beginning of this school year, they have become large enough in all of the Colleges, maybe because of the desire to fulfill more of their requirements. The R. P. [Reverend Pater = Father] Dominicus Schmid has been sent to Freiburg im Breisgau to serve there as Minister and Procurator. He has not answered me any more to my letters, and for this reason, I do not know if he has received them.

I have had the great comfort to know that the Honorable Sister was in Sargans, and that she is healthy. May the Lord preserve her and her children’s health, which will be very much needed. I received a letter from her last Friday via the messenger who has the custom to come here every other year. I have just given her an answer [letter] to deliver it to you. She will come together with her husband to Sargans or Lucerne, where she seems to be well known. If you might have some agnus Dei [plural; votive pictures out of wax] or any other gifts created by the nuns, I would like to ask the Highly Honorable Juncker Father to entrust her with some since I have heard that they are very much needed in Altötting, where I hope to be transferred to next year. The children, whom I have
been teaching now for eleven years, have robbed me of all my gifts. But please handle this as you see fit and consider it as appropriate.

There are not many news here, except that people are afraid that a religious war might break out because those who are not Catholic act very aggressively, which would also not be good for our Fatherland. The weather has been until now harmfully humid, wet, and warm. The farmers have feared that their crops will rot. Only in the last two days it has been cold enough, foggy but without snow. The brother Franz Joseph will have hopefully received the writing, which I sent to him via Reverend Father Carolus Ruettiman, who has since traveled to Lucerne.

To my Highly Honorable Honorable Mother I send humble and filial greetings, and so also warm regards to my maiden Sister, Maria Elisabeth, and The Honorable Brother who will hopefully remember me in their prayers. I submit myself under my Highly Honorable Juncker Father asking humbly for his favors and mercy.

I remain  
my Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s  
honorable son  
Philipp. Segesser. S.J.  
Ingolstadt, January 6, 1721.
Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

I do not doubt that both the Highly Honorable Juncker Father and the Honorable Mother have completed the Lent season well and in good health, and subsequently enjoy this happy Easter with great delight. I wish this both to my honorable Father and Honorable Mother with my whole heart and beg the dear God to let me hear these news all the time and enjoy them.

Thank God, I am completely healthy except for small problems that I have to overcome from time to time; such as bouts of very strong fever; however, they are not so dangerous etc. I believe that this will be the last time before the departure from Sargans that I can send a letter to my dear parents.

Since the pleasant holiday of the Holy Trinity to which I have been looking forward for a long time is arriving, I did not want to forget to invite humbly my highly honorable dear parents to increase my joy and, if God pleases, [come to see me]. I would be so happy as many others, who will do the offering together with me of the first, and in total numbers the eleventh, Holy Mass offering for the great God. I cannot emphasize it enough [literally: say] that I would be so overjoyed that I could feed with the heavenly bread of the angels those who have nourished me with bodily food for such a long time. That would be such a great joy for me and a great comfort for my most beloved parents! But if this will not happen, the distance between the places is to be blamed for it; this distance has removed me so far from my parents, and will probably remove me further.

However, I will try to the best of my abilities to imagine my Highly Honorable parents as vividly as possible [Neg. 51767] in the chapel of Saint Francis Xavier where I will offer the first Mass, as if they were personally present. Hence I would like to ask you in filial manner not to forget me, especially not on that day, in your holy prayer, which would allow me to carry out this holy service more completely and more honorably. I will invite the Canon Lord Pfister from Constance or the canon of the bishopric church to serve as assistant.

But since neither will be able to attend, I will ask the grace and love of my K. P. Professor Pauly Zetl. The choir servants will be Magister Ludwig Schumacher who had joined the Novitiate together with me, and Magister Ignatius Amrhn. I would have invited Father Regents P. Joseph Reder to serve as assistant, if not another, who is a senior to me, would have been faster, which is all in good order. I hope that the highly Honorable Mother will not reproach me for not sending her a special letter, as it would have been my obligation. But she will understand how difficult it is with letters. And she will grasp everything what I have written to the highly honorable Juncker Father, which I have, to some extent, also addressed to her.
I also had wanted to write to the Honorable Brother Franz Joseph to invite him together with the Sister, Maria Elisabeth, to invite them in a friendly fashion to come to this first Holy Mass. I hope that they will excuse me [for not writing them a separate letter]. It seems to me that the Highly Honorable Juncker Father could send the Honorable Brother, since he would not miss any major businesses, quite easily. He would at least substitute for that joy in some way that I would have felt if my parents had come.

Moreover, he would be able to see at this opportunity also Germany, after he had experienced France and Italy. The letter that my Highly Honorable father wrote on February 10 I have received well on March 20. Here we are very worried for the travelers. We would like to know whether there will be a new war with the Turks. By contrast, the conflict with the Non-Catholics [Protestants] has been completely settled and put to rest. Otherwise, I do not know anything new to report, except that Magister Joseph Balthasar in Lucerne has died. I hope that he could offer his first Mass in Heaven. With this I submit myself under the fatherly grace.

Ingolstadt, April 27, 1721
My Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s most loyal son Philipp Segesser, S.J.
Letter to his Father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, July 8, 1721 (Neg. 51768-51769)

Neg. ASM 51768
PA 437/585
No. 6

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

The letter that you wrote to me on May 10, written in fatherly love, I have received well on June 2, though I have not answered it until now and thanked you for it because of various businesses that I had to take care of. In part I also had wanted to wait until [your] departure for Lucerne. I have no doubt that your journey will go smoothly. Yet I wanted to send you from my heart a successful journey and a happy arrival in Lucerne, and I wish that you will enjoy with the same health as in Sagans the changing air in Lucerne. I have directed my prayer and offering the Mass toward that journey and the rest. I will do so also in the future.

Since soon there will be the feast day of the Saint Henry, which is the name day of my Highly Honorable Juncker Father, I did not want to neglect my filial duties to contribute to it and to send, like the other siblings, hearty congratulations. May the graceful God grant that my most beloved Juncker Father according to his own wishes and as a comfort for his family, may still experience many years to come in good health and witness this holy name day. That this will happen surely, I will, apart from my usual prayers and good works, offer six Holy Masses in the name of my father. I beg you to be content with this spiritual dedication. Other and greater [material] gifts can be given by the other siblings and friends. That my Honorable Mother’s Sister Lady, a nun, has been called by God to the heavenly joys, I do not want to lament further since I know well that we have to submit surely under God’s will since nothing happens here in this world without His wise arrangement or divine permit. I myself would wish to be so graced to be called by God to heaven very soon so that I would no longer displease Him here in this life. There, by contrast, I could love him eternally. I have offered both for you and for the memory of my Patrino [godfather], the Highly Honorable [Neg. 51769] Archpriest, the Holy Mass which I promised the Honorable Mother on her name’s feast day, I will offer soon. It is necessary that she explain her intention or opinion. Apart from that I would be delighted to learn that the journey went well, with everyone in good health.

I believe that this letter might well be the last but one that I will write before the Tentionat [?, perhaps: testing period for the novice]. If the Honorable Sister might have an opportunity to forward a letter that might have been sent to her and belongs to me, before that date. It might be much more advisable. But the Highly Honorable Junker Father should handle this according to his own judgment. In the meantime I submit myself, apart from my filial greetings under the Highly Honorable Mother, and also to the most beloved siblings, under the ever present fatherly grace and favor.
I remain my Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s most loyal son
Philipp Segesser, S.J.
Ingolstadt, July 8, 1721
Letter 7

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, August 23, 1721 (Neg. 51770-51771)

Neg. ASM 51770
PA 437/585
No. 7

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

The fatherly writing together with the package delivered by the acquaintance Lux Appenzeller77 I have received well, as confirmed by the fatherly writing from August 23. Partly it gave me joy, but partly also sorrow. I was delighted because I learned from your successful return travel and arrival in Lucerne. I was grieved because I learned of the mother’s illness. May God grant me that I will receive better news from her in the next letter. I will certainly not neglect to pray God to return the health to her. Furthermore, I will not neglect to beg God to preserve the health of the Highly Honorable Juncker Father. I am certain that what I cannot achieve with God because of my imperfection and sins, the Holy Mass will more likely produce.

Apart from that, I like to express my dutiful thanks for the rich, fatherly, and precious memory and respect, which will certainly do me well. But I must confess my shamefulness that I have frequently caused inconvenience and costs. I gain consolation from knowing that it derives from fatherly grace and mercy. So I have to accept it in no other way but with filial dutifulness and thankfulness. I hope that the ever graceful God will recompense you with thousandfold blessings, which I will ask Him to grant.

I wrote the last time that I wanted to send to my Highly Honorable Juncker Father and my Honorable Mother a souvenir before my departure, if an opportunity might arise. At this opportunity I wanted to take the liberty and ask that you do not dismiss it. [Neg. 51771] The [true] value you will learn from the attached book. Truly, if you were not my most beloved parents and siblings, I would not give away this holy oil that I regard as very valuable. It was given to me as a gift upon my first Mass, which went quite well, as a particular grace. I do not think that I will ever get in my lifetime anything else more valuable. They treat this holy oil very parsimoniously, as is appropriate, and hand it out to noble lords as a grace in one or two small glasses.

The book with the six glasses I am sending to the Highly Honorable Juncker Father and Honorable Mother as a gift for both. The book with two glasses belongs to the Honorable Sister Barbara who had requested such from me. The book can also be used for reading as you please. Keep the holy oil on a small altar.

The noble Lady and Abbess of Rauthausen has been kind enough to add a couple of lines addressed to me in the letter by the clerical Honorable Sister. I would have liked to express my obligatory thanks, if I had the time to think of composing such a letter, just like the present letter is rushed. I will look for another opportunity to do so. To hear from the Honorable Mother that she is doing better would be a comfort for me. You should not deprive me of such comfort, whatever time
it might be.

Herewith I am expressing once again my most obligatory thanks for such a great good deed and fatherly grace. I recommend myself to stay in the Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s grace,

Your most loyal son Philip Segesser, S.J.
Ingolstadt, August 23, 1721

P.S.: To my dearest siblings a friendly greeting; the concerns of the Honorable Brother I will consider in the prayer and the offering of the Holy Mass. The picture that is included at the beginning of the book I am sending particularly to the Honorable Mother. Even if it does not resemble me completely, it will soon do so. The picture on the paper I have designated for the Juncker Father as a souvenir, etc.
Letter 8

Letter to his Father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Ingolstadt, September 13th, 1721 (Neg. 51772)

Neg. ASM 51772
PA 437/585
No. 8

Highly Honorable Juncker Father,

These pictures I am sending the Highly Honorable Juncker Father in filial dutifulness and greeting by way of the Magistrate Ludovicum Schumacher, who promised to take these things along at least up to Constance. Maybe you could use these images on the book. Or, should they not be good enough then please give them to my Honorable Brother in Ruswill, who is the only one who has not yet sent me an answer about the invitation to the first Mass, nor has he ever written once. I hope he will be more diligent in keeping me in his prayer, the same way as I think of him in mine. My Highly Honorable Mother, filial greetings to you, and so also to my siblings. On the 16th of this month I will travel to Altötting. Herewith I recommend myself to stay in the fatherly graces and mercy.

My Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s most loyal son Philip Segesser, S.J.
Ingolstadt, September, 13, 1721

P.S.: If possible, please let me know if this letter has arrived.
Altötting

This little town, situated in southeastern Germany on the border to Austria, ca. 60 miles northeast of Munich, had originally been a Benedictine monastery founded in 876 by King Karlmann. In 910, the Huns ransacked the place and burned down all buildings, but in 1228 Duke Louis I of Bavaria had the monastery rebuilt, handing it over to Augustinians canons, who stayed there until the secularization in 1803. Altötting used to be a major pilgrimage site for the oil painting of the “Black Madonna.” The name “Altötting” (Old Ötting) finds its explanation in that a new city was founded next to it in ca. 1224, Neuötting (New Ötting). The Jesuits arrived there in 1591 out of a sense of duty toward the Bavarian duke, but the parish there flourished rapidly counter to all expectations because of a little chapel that attracted streams of pilgrims because of an alleged miracle that had happened there.79

Letter 9

Letter to his Father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Altötting, July 13th, 1722 (Neg. 51773)

Neg. ASM 51773
PA 437/585
No. 9

Highly Honorable much loved Juncker Father etc.

Because this opportunity has arisen for me, and Juncker Bircher, who will deliver this letter, has inquired with me [talked to me], I cannot fail to observe my duty as your child and can no longer wait until a a chance might open up to travel,80 and because tomorrow even the beloved name day of my Highly Honorable Father will occur, I want to send, like the other duty-bound loving children, my humblest congratulations. I wish from the bottom of my heart that the benevolent God, along with my father’s own wish and the Lord grant him many years in the best of health, in soul and body, for God’s own wish and us children’s greatest comfort. And so that my wish may be stronger, I will put all these requests to God into my offering of the Holy Mass as well as into other spiritual practices, as I have done in previous years, as you know. Both the two Holy Masses have already been offered for the Highly Honorable Juncker Father as well as for the Honorable Mother and indeed most of those in the holy chapel itself, although the turn to read them has not yet been up to me more than twice. I hope that you have received the letter, which I had already sent a while ago, from Rector Father Ludovico Schumacher. To my Highly Honorable Mother and beloved siblings my filial and humblest regards, but I hope to remain always in the fatherly favor and graces that I have always experienced best.
Philipp Segesser S.J.
Altötting, July 13, 1722. proferanti venia [offering my grace].
The city of Straubing is located in southeastern Lower Bavaria with a history that goes back to the Neolithic age. However, the presence of the Romans since their conquest in 16-14 B.C.E. elevated Straubing to a major trading post. During the Middle Ages, Straubing enjoyed the great attention by the various Bavarian dukes, who expanded the city and built many churches and a ducal castle (since 1356).

Letter 10

Letter to his Father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Straubing, November 9, 1722 (Neg. 51774-51775)

Neg. ASM 51774
PA 437/585
No. 10

Highly Born Noble Juncker Father,

With no small comfort for my heart, I have finally received the most endearing letter from my Highly Honorable Juncker Father as well as the accompanying things. Hopefully the small package, which I have likewise sent from Altötting by way of Reverend Father Jodocum Schumacher, will have made it into your hand. I would be pleased to receive a report if that does not create any further complications.

In the meantime, I say a filial thank you for the fatherly gracefulness and the generous gift, but especially for letting me know of the good health of my Highly Honorable Juncker Father, as well as my Honorable Mother, for whom I have been very worried, and now I hope that this will indeed continue. In Altötting I have imploringly prayed to the mother of God prior to my departure for this. But I have asked for it only insofar as it will be the will of God and the spiritual well-being of my Highly Honorable beloved parents to enjoy their life still for some more years for the consolation of us children. May Her divine son grant them this well-being, which I do not doubt they will receive. Furthermore, I wish from my heart that I may return the fatherly gracefulness and truly grand generosity with my meager service and filial duties. If nothing else, I hope the omnibenevolent God will at least accomplish what my abilities fail to do. I will also direct the Mass offering to this end.

I report also that, God be praised, I am in good health here, if only the place were not so bad and if only I had simply found more qualified disciples with whom, as I fear, I will not gain any honor. Until now I have not had any. I will, however, not spare any effort to understand the 26 soldiers as well as their captain, the count of Seinsheim who has indeed studied, but is cutting a bad figure on the theater stage. [Neg. 51775] I will teach him in the art of war. I hope, with the grace of
God to make something out of them as willing sheep. Otherwise, there is enough to do around here and the time is not passing too slowly for me as long as I stay healthy.

Reverend Father Rector Jacobus Holderried arrived a few days ago to head the College. Maybe he is known to you because he has lectured in Lucerne. That I have not been able to be in the vicinity I have once had great hopes, what would have been great joy and comfort to me to visit my lovely parents. However, nullus propheta gratus in patria [Latin: the prophet does not count for anything at home].

Concerning the news that was sent from the mission, it is not at my wish that anything is supposed to be reported. This is simply because I do not doubt that it has come from those whom God usually guides. So far as I can tell, it has happened not because of the people but because of god’s will. If it were to happen differently, not according to my will, but according to god’s, then the Highly Honorable parents would be so over joyed that their youngest son was called by God to such a high service.

Since it is such a long way, and if such great burden comes with these letters, I hope one will not regard it as a lack of respect. In this letter, I pay respect in particular to my Highly Honorable Juncker mother upon the coming holy names day and also to her joyful festival, do I send my best wishes.

Although I keep my good wishes very short, I respectfully pay my childly obligations in the promised offering of a Holy Mass and other spiritual performances for her desires.

In order to prepare myself more for the Mass, I acknowledge that this is my obligation. I am otherwise, I am currently somewhere where I have not been able to inquire about the situation at the College in Lucerne. I do not want to say what other news there are because I believe that the Father Conrad Spengler will still be in Lucerne. I would have wanted to send him this letter because I do not doubt that he will deliver it properly since he is my acquaintance.

Other letters addressed to me, can also be given to him. He has already granted me this kindness several times. If the old lady governor from Herttenstein is still alive, I recommend myself to her. I am diligently thinking of her as well as of the Honorable Mayor of Sursee, the Highly Honorable Canons, my beloved siblings, and all other loved ones, relatives, etc., etc.

I remain my Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s most loyal son Philip Segesser S.J.
Straubing, November 9, 1722

P.S.: I will write to the Highly Honorable Brother in Ruswill at another opportunity. In the meantime give him my best and most humble greetings.
Letter 11

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Straubing, July 1, 1723 (Neg. 51776-51777)

Neg. ASM 51776
PA 437/585
No. 11

Highly Born Noble Juncker Father,

It is obligatory in every respect that I observe my duties as a child insofar as the upcoming feast day of St. Henry reminds me, which is my Noble Juncker Father’s most beloved namesday. I want to send my filial congratulations, just like my siblings are doing, and replace with the quill what the others do orally in a dutiful fashion, or will do. I wish the Highly Honorable Juncker Father from the bottom of my heart all the good luck and well-being on this holy name day, and so also on many others following, which would be highest consolation for us all children and friends. Concerning the Bindband, with which I intend to strengthen my congratulations, it will be the same as in the previous year insofar as my status [as a Jesuit] does not allow me, as is well known, to do anything else.

I hope that those who are closer to the dear parents will substitute for my absence in all the expected obligations. May the Highly Honorable Juncker Father accept [my] intention to make up for it, if it has not yet happened, especially as regards the Holy Mass that I will offer for you. I hope that the Honorable Mother, next to the Highly Honorable Juncker Father, [Neg. 51777] is in good health. to whom I recommend myself to her humbly, and also the dear relatives, which I wish with my full heart. It would give me consolation to hear that. May the Highly Honorable Juncker Father not be angry with me that I quickly compose these few lines. The time does not permit me once again [to write more]. The reasons you will learn from Reverend Father Provincial either now or later, who has charged me with the business [duties]. I just wish to satisfy for the first time my superiors. Herewith I submit myself most humbly under the fatherly grace and favor.

I remain my Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s
most loyal son, Philipp Segesser, S.J.
Straubing, July 1, 1723

[No. 12 in the file: loose letter, no date or address, but certainly a part of Philipp Segesser’s correspondence]
Neuburg an der Donau

Neuburg an der Donau is located on the Danube river, hence its name, in western Bavaria, Germany, northeast of Augsburg. During the Carolingian empire it was briefly a bishop’s seat, and in 1505 it became the capital of the new dukedom Pfalz-Neuburg. From 1717 to 1718 Neuburg was the virtual capital of the Palatinate, but then the Elector Philipp moved his court to Heidelberg. In 1002 women Benedictines had already settled in Neuburg, and their convent building later became the housing for the Jesuits when they were called to Neuburg in 1614 in order to strengthen the efforts of reintroducing the Catholic faith. The Franciscans arrived in Neuburg in 1656, followed by the women Carmelites in 1661 and the Ursulines in 1698.83

Letter 12

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Neuburg an der Donau, May 8, 1726 (Neg. 51780-51781)

Neg. ASM 51780
PA 437/585
No. 13

Highly Born Noble Juncker Father,

It would surely have been my obligation recently to send to my most beloved parents my wishes for a happy and blissful Easter. I would have certainly not missed that if I had not expected [first] Mr. Lux to arrive here, as the noble Juncker father wrote to me. Since, however, he has not yet arrived, I decided, in order not to lose the time completely and to meet my filial obligations, to write the present letter. I hope that my noble Juncker Father and the most beloved Mother have spent the holy season of Lent with great rewards and in the best of health. I assume that you will continue the happy Easter season in the same good conditions and can enjoy the same excellent health. This is the only wish that inspires me when I endeavor to offer my daily Mass and do my other spiritual exercises.

I hope the noble Juncker Father has received the last letter through the hands of the Reverend Father Provincial in which I reported that the money that you sent has been properly arrived and deposited, for which I express my dutiful thanks once again. I will certainly not forget such a grace and fatherly support also in another world,84 if I might be so fortunate and receive God’s grace to become a useful instrument to convert those to the true Catholic Church who live in the deep blackness of superstition, or at least to keep the converted in the faith.85
After all, I hear from Rome that some Reverend Father Procurators have arrived from India who particularly request missionaries from our province. Perhaps they are those to whom God might deign to entrust me, which truly could not be a bigger comfort for me since my long-lasting desire might finally be fulfilled in this life. If that were to happen, Mr. Lux from Appenzell would not arrive [Neg. 51781] at a bad time because then I could hand over to him a simple souvenir of me for my Highly Honorable dearest parents and friends, and might also receive one through him from my noble Juncker Father. But do not think that because I am writing this that the news would already have been announced to me.

I very much desire to receive such delightful news, but whether my wish will be fulfilled, has to be determined by Rome, to the obedience of which I have recently pledged most ardently through the fourth vow. Certainly, if it were to happen, it will happen through the particular arrangement by God in whom I entrust myself completely. I have no other concern. I beg the noble Juncker Father to send me a short report about the confusing conflicts between Rome and the city of Lucerne. People talk so much about it here that one cannot know what to believe. These rumors awake great worries in me and the others. They say that the Pope has denied them the right to celebrate the anniversary, next to other severe threats, etc.

On the side, although we have the most delightful Spring weather, the corn begins to grow every day, on the one hand because the long winter has held it back completely at many places, especially where the sun spreads its heat somewhat later so that it does not grow at all. That necessitated [for the farmers], if they did not want to leave the fields in fallow, to sow once again the summer seeds at many places. On the other hand, the constant heat without any rain does not allow the seeds and other plants to grow high. The people are afraid of a great inflation to come [increase of prices because of a food shortage]. Further, the strong fever attacks and Bedecken have not let go, though they are not as strong as before. I hope that things look better in my fatherland, as long as the omnibenevolent God continues to hold it in His Divine protection in the best of peace and blessing. I submit myself under the always received fatherly graces and favors.

Sending humbly [filially] my regards to my most beloved Honorable Mother, I remain the Highly Born Noble Juncker Father’s most loyal son, Philippus Segesser S. J.
Letter 13

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Neuburg on the Danube, July 30, 1726 (Neg. 51782-51783)

Neg. ASM 51782
PA 437/585
No. 14

Highly Born Noble Juncker Father,

I have received, as expected, the letter from the 24th of the past month that was handed over to me on the 6th of this month. Likewise, I have also received the letter sent to me on May, 23, which has dashed all of my expectations and hopes [of being selected for the American mission]. But I clearly see that I will not reach my goal this time either, in spite of the expressed wish and the approval that was sent to me by Adu R.P Generalis, and also in spite of the fact that the previous Reverend Father Provincial had not been opposed. Nevertheless, irrespective of it all, I have been ordered to stay here.

I must accept this from God’s hand and this acceptance is a gift to God, which is harder for me than anything that I have ever suffered in the Society. Now I am prevented from reaching my goal which I have always longed for and that I will achieve for sure. I had actually thought that my most Honorable parents would have deemed themselves most blessed to have had a child who strives in mind and heart to follow in his forefathers. And indeed they would have felt more like that because it is not simply a matter of passing time, but instead the honor of God, whom my beloved parents already gave their child for the spiritual salvation of so many endangered from their eternal downfall.89

Naturally one can find opportunity and work in Europe as well, as I have experienced, to do good. There are many helpers, but most of them have left. Why me? Why does God want to call upon me, I would not be driven by this, otherwise I would just let it go. But as I said, I am a gift to God [God will decide]. Since on the next Monday falls the holy feast day of Saint Henry, which is my Honorable Juncker Father’s most blessed namesday, I wanted to fulfil my duty as a child through this letter, which I could have done very well orally, if my travel would have taken place.

Herewith I would like to send my blessed Juncker Father blessing and happiness and many other days like this in the future so that the Highly Honorable Juncker Father can celebrate and experience similar days in the best health to the greatest consolation of the noble Honorable Mother and the other relatives. [Neg. 51783] I will also follow through with my obligation to God so that God will re-enforce my best intended wish with his almighty blessing.

I humbly offer the Holy Mass to the Father Balthasar as a Bindband to form his own opinion.90 I beg you to accept this Mass next to other good deeds freely and to enjoy it. I hope the other siblings will better replace what I do not have the power to do. I ask to send my humblest recommendations to the Honorable Mother. I submit myself herewith to the fatherly mercy and graces with the most dutiful words of thanks for so many good things that I have received.
Neuberg on the Donau
July, 30, 1726.
The Highly Honorable Juncker Father’s
most loyal son,
Philippus [sic] Segesser, S.J.
Hochdorf

Hochdorf is a municipality in the district of Lucerne with a very old history, though it was never a major urban center. The town was first mentioned sometime between 893 and 924.

Letter 14

Letter to his mother Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi, Hochdorf, October 16, 1727 (Neg. 51784)

Neg. ASM 51784
PA 437/585
No. 15

Highly Honorable Mother,

with my regards to the dearly Honorable Junker Father,

God be praised, as soon as I rode away, I felt better, so that I arrived well at the brother and recovered with some soup. I was amazed that I ate at night with such a good appetite and that I did not fall asleep until after two in the morning.

Today, after a small lazier, I am not as well as last night, which might be the result from the prescribed powder that I took before bed last night. I especially notice a greater aversion to food than yesterday. I believe this also has something to do with my departure from my parents. I didn’t want to make this known, and you might have been stronger than me anyway.

The Honorable Canon director apologized in every respect for the horse, due to the fact that Balthasar wrote to him and said that he would travel with him to Wangen, Rietwil, and Saint Urban on the 20th of this month. He hopes that mother and I will not hold it against him that he couldn’t send it. It is not sitting well with him, as I noticed, that we have sent Joseph back. When the Honorable Mother writes to him, could she deliver the message that I will deliver the Cohum [?] who was entrusted to me as desired. With regard to the horses that we have taken with us, they are in truth bad enough, but I don’t want to waste time in this good weather. Rather, I want to push myself on, as far as I can, and if I notice [Neg. 51785] that it isn’t good enough, I will await the old Krumenacher tomorrow in Zürich, and take from him new horses for the stretch to Constance, since today’s and tomorrow’s travels will not take us that far, and then send back the student with the wounded/hurting horses.

It was good planning that I left before the arrival of the Reverend Father Rector, otherwise he could have thought that I had other intentions. The brother’s old maidservant was lying in bed when I arrived yesterday and the brother said to me that she had wanted to leave. However, he did not want to let her go, although she probably could no longer work because she lacked the strength, etc. I express my humblest thanks for the welcome graces, the rich gift of fatherly and motherly
concern, for the best sisterly thoughtfulness, as well as with my humblest apologies for the expenses and inconveniences, as well as thanks for the continued favor. With many regards [?], October 16, 1727. If the brother had not had to do business today, the messenger would not have reached us.

My dearly Honorable Mothe’s
your most loyal son,
Philipp

P.S.: I beg the maiden sisters to keep me in their prayers, and to Francisca I say thank you, may God protect you, if I have not yet prayed so yesterday, etc. My appreciation will have to be reflected in the Holy Mass offerings.
Constance

This city, located on the Lake of Constance, straight across from modern-day Switzerland, is perhaps best known as the site of the Council of Constance, 1414-1418, where the Schism (three competing popes) was ended and where the Bohemian reformer John Hus was burned at the stake. But its history extends far back into the time of the Celts, ca. 200 B.C.E. Since 585 C.E. Constance was a bishop’s seat and constantly profited from the extensive trade from all lands north of the Alps down to Italy. Between 1192 and 1213 the city gained its independence from all local princes and was only subject to the German king. In the fifteenth century the city tried in vain to join the Swiss Federation, which the latter rejected, fearing that Constance could have an overbearing significance in its own territory. In 1527 Constance accepted the Protestant Confession, expelling its bishop, but in 1548 the Bishop could take over again, re-Catholizing the city. In the same year, Constance was on the losing side of the Schmalkaldic War against the Hapsburgians, who integrated it into their own territory. In 1604, with the help of a papal bull, the Jesuits could settle in the city against the citizens’ loud protests. The Order created a major school there, which has survived until today as an ordinary Gymnasium (academic high school), which was attended, among others, by later famous Franz Anton Mesmer from 1746 to 1750. During the Thirty-Years War, the Swedes besieged Constance in 1733, but without success. The Jesuits enjoyed the support of the Swabian landed gentry who sent their children to the Jesuit school in Constance.92

Letter 15

Letter to his father Heinrich Ludwig Segesser II. Constance, October 19, 1727 (Neg. 51786-51787)

Neg. ASM 51786
PA 437/585
No. 16

Highly Honorable Junker Father

After my former disciple Krumenacher had arrived, as I want to report briefly to the noble Honorable Junker Father, I finally arrived after five days in Constance on the 19th, without any noticeable trouble other than that I had so far no appetite to eat or drink, but I hope that I will improve soon.

The Honorable Sister in Hermetschwill looks bad, and she is really exhausted from the illness. I have stayed there overnight, from there I traveled to Baden, and on that route the Harz-mantel93 [coat or cape?] was very useful.

If we had ridden to Zürich, we would have had to change the animals and would have had to ride the smaller ass. Moreover, I have been able to get to villages where I could offer the Holy Mass. I did not travel to Schaffhausen; but instead I went to Rheinau an hour and a half away in
order to offer Mass there. Father Rusconi dutifully waited for my arrival and one of the Prelates welcomed me and invited me to have lunch with him, but I was not able to consume any meal. The food was prepared two hours earlier so that would not hold me back from my journey. But since I realize that I could not arrive in Constance with our horses on the same day, taking the advice of the Prelate I went through a Carthusian settlement to Härderen to seek the company of the other Father Rusconi, who kindly welcomed me and who this morning guided me for an hour in the right direction. The next Friday night we stayed overnight in a Lutheran, or Calvinistic, village by the name of Raffss, because the horse that the disciple had ridden turned to a stable and could not be moved even with force so that the person riding it had to get off.

At any rate, it was already pretty dark. In Reinau, we looked for a guesthouse and asked for refreshment for us and the horses, because I was not inclined to spend time in the monastery. I therefore happily got off the horse. The servant could have returned this afternoon, but the horses needed to rest, since they were very exhausted. The Krumenacher would have liked to travel with me, however, he lacks this experience, moves very slowly with the horse, so I intend to turn to Marckdorff tomorrow afternoon so that I can pick up the mail on Tuesday morning and can arrive Wednesday at noon in Mindelheim.

I believe I can travel more cheaply that way than taking own horses both ways. The noble Juncker Father had wanted to pay the cost for the return journey, however, the disciple did not have any money with him to pay for himself, so I gave him three ducats. He had agreed, when we were still at home, to return them to me within three days. But since we have spent more time travelling than expected I paid for the horses and the servants for two extra days for a total of three ducats and three gulden. But he must return the saddle and the black horse blanket at home.

I submit myself in the meantime to the best fatherly grace that one could experience, and would also like to express my dutiful and also humble thanks for the fatherly graces and mercy.

I will give a full report of my journey after its completion.
Constance
October 19, 1727.

My Highly Born and Noble Father’s
most loyal son
Philippy [sic] Segesser, S.J.

P.S.: Most humblest greetings to the Honorable Mother.
Greetings to the other beloved siblings, etc.
The messenger has already been paid for the chest.
Ellwangen

Ellwangen is situated in the valley of the river Jagst, in the east of modern-day Baden-Württemberg, ca. 50 miles northeast of Stuttgart, originating in a seventh-century Alemannic settlement. In 764 C.E. a Benedictine monastery was founded there which rose to the status of an imperial abbey in 817. The famous Greek-Byzantine apostle of the Slavs, Method was said to have been imprisoned there from 870 to 873. The city of Ellwangen developed out of the larger monastic settlement in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The monastery, however, declined steadily, and was transformed into a House of Secular Canons in 1460. In 1524 the Protestant Reformation entered Ellwangen, and the canons were forced to leave. At the end of the sixteenth and far into the seventeenth century the witchcraze took a large number of victims. In 1632, during the Thirty-Years War, the Swedes occupied the town. The first Jesuits visited Ellwangen in 1568, but they did not begin with any serious settlement in that town until 1611. In 1658 four members of the order arrived and founded a Gymnasium (high school), which soon became so popular that they could even establish a philosophical tract in their curriculum in 1723-1729. In 1681 the Jesuits established a house in the town, and they build a church between 1724 and 1729, which was closed again in 1802 in the wake of the secularization. The Jesuit house in Ellwangen was upgraded to a college in 1729.96

Letter 16

Letter to his mother Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Ellwangen, December 17, 1727 (Neg. 51788-51789)

Neg. ASM 51788
PA 437/585
No. 17

Highly Honorable Mother, etc.

I did not want to neglect to observe my filial duties from the distance and to send my best meaning wishes and filial commitment for the upcoming feast day of Saint Catherine, which is Honorable Mother’s most pleasant name day by means of the present writing. I do not only want to repeat but also redouble thousand fold my wish that the good God may grant the fulfillment of all the wishes both for her own happiness and for our greatest comfort and preserve the Honorable Mother in best health until her old age. For the purpose that this wish will come true I attach my little Bindband; I believe that the meaning or your own interpretation will be self-evident or will become understandable, etc.

I hope that the noble Juncker Father, whom I send my most humble and filial regards, will recover from day to day the previous strength and regain his complete health. I hope I will hear of that soon. I have, God be praised, a good appetite to eat, but the stomach does not cooperate and makes me feel the pressure. I have brought those stomach aches with me here (the Honorable Sister
from Rotthausen sent me vermouth and a tincture based on amber because I had strong pressure and
gas).97

But I do not know how to apply the medicine since I have never taken vermouth, so I do not
know whether I should take it early in the morning or in the evening, and what it might be good for.
Regarding the mixture of amber the sister writes on a piece of paper that it is helpful against many
sicknesses, especially dizziness. But she does not say anything else. I thought that it might also be
good against stomach aches if you take three or four drops mixed into a creamy soup. I would prefer
to have a better explanation. It would be good if I were equipped with all kinds of medicine with
which I could help the poor peasants who die because they do not get any. I do not know how to
help them.

I would like to get the three types of clear liquor that would be very helpful against the
intense fever. I also would like to know, since I have forgotten it, how much each one of them needs
to get and at what time. The first person who was sent to heaven, as I hope, was an old peasant
woman who was also called Catharina. A number of the peasants from my home country have
followed her. I had to do the service for them instead of the local priest because they do not have
any except for the city minister who burdens the missionary with everything that concerns the work.
This worry eats at me and I do not know further what to do here at this mission.98 The last mission
where I served, five hours from here in Ebnath, had been pretty difficult because of the really wild
weather [Neg. 51789] in which I had to travel. The most difficult seems to be that everyone requests
something from the missionary. When I finished my last mission after four days, the church elders,
their parents, their siblings, the female cook, the sacristan, and the administrators came to the village
and asked something from me as a souvenir. If that continues like that, I will soon run out of all my
things.99

On the sixth of December (Christmonat) I will offer a Mass in Höchstätt in the Diocese of
Würzburg,100 which is located more than five hours from here. On Christmas I will offer another
Mass in Gastzell, which is only two hours from here.101 There is is plenty enough to do for a
missionary. If I am at home, I have to give at least three or four kinderlehren [catechism classes for
children] in the surrounding villages, and in the parish outside of the city every week.

While I am writing this I was offered a new mission for the thirteenth of December, and I
hope it is only three hours from here. There are plenty of things to do, perhaps even too much.
Maybe it would have been easier to preach to the female farmhands at 6 o’clock.102 The most
difficult here seems to be that every person has their own demand on the missionary. Recently I was
on the mission, and after four days, when I finished it, the parish elders, their parents, the brothers
and sisters, the female cook, and the administrators in the village arrived. They asked me for a little
gift as a souvenir. If it goes on like this I will run out of things to give.

The images of the agnus Dei [lamb of God] in the meadow also suit me very well for the
peasant children, if only I had enough. I am very frugal with them in case the occasion may arise
that I may have to stay in my office. Recently I gave as a gift to one of the ministers a small needle-
pin image, which he immediately locked away in his money chest because he liked it so much.

So that I am more supported concerning the Masses that I have promised, so that you at home103
are also assured, once again; please be assured that I do not offer the Masses as an idle
practice.104 So you can plan at the beginning of the month what you intend.105 For the Juncker Father
and the Honorable Mother, I will offer four Masses monthly. That’s two for the Juncker Father and
two for the Honorable Mother.
For the honorable Brother, for the Honorable Sister Barbara, for the one in Hermetschwill, and for the Mademoiselle Elisebeth, whom I send best wishes for next Wednesday on her names day, I will offer a Mass for each of you especially every month so that I can make up somehow for the good deeds that I have received from each one, and this as long as I live and can read Masses.

You can live here rather well, because you can buy a little cake or a little chicken for three or four kreuzer at most; a pair of doves for a groschen and four or five kreuzer; a rabbit for 14 or 15 kreuzer. A fat [stuffed] goose costs around 20 kreuzer. The venison is also available at a reasonable price. I do not know what it costs, because there is a lot of it here. The wine is also not expensive, as you certainly know; however it is not from the Junker father’s cellar. Instead it tastes almost like water in comparison. I wished I would have with me a bottle of white wine particularly on the mission; however, I must come to an end. I submit myself humbly to the motherly care.

Ellwangen, December 17, 1727
Highly Honorable Mother’s
honorable son,
Philipp Segesser, S.J.

[Neg. 51789a] P.S.: I want to offer two Masses yearly for Francisca. This is the third letter since my departure that I have sent home. The first one was from Constance via the Krumenacher. The other from here to the Juncker Father to be forwarded to the Reverend Father court preacher. This one I am going to send to the Reverend Father Mohr, if this convenient. I ask for only one line [from you] whether the letters have been delivered or not. What the Honorable Mother requests from me regarding the prayer has already happened and will continue to happen in the future. If something else might happen, would then the Honorable Mother give me news directly from herself or through someone else. Let me also know what changes have occurred in Lucerne.

I would gladly see it if the Juncker Brother could write me what is happening in Lucerne because it would be difficult for the Juncker Father [to do so], etc. etc. I submit myself to him especially.
Highly Honorable and Noble Brother,

I do not doubt that the erection of the new building has already been achieved to the best end, and that everyone very much approves of my [?] journey begun and completed in prayer of everything which was excellently arranged, and of their private affairs. I also assume that my latest letters were received. At the same time, moreover, I do not doubt that the Honorable Brother has been selected for and admitted into the station of the innermost Senate by unanimous vote. I congratulate him heartily for his good fortune; may God approve that the Honorable Brother run through all the steps of this office equally fortunately, and may he be promoted, until he reaches the highest summit of the office. May the truthful Father of the Fatherland listen to him. The aim for which I offered up my prayers and devotions rather often, is the very purpose for which I will continue to pray often. For it will not be bad for me to have a brother in such a high office, since the Canons of St. Ulrich, appoint, and this indeed very soon, the Honorable Brother [?]. I also give thanks for this most pleasing memory of the year, the happiest day, on which I shall be singularly mindful [of him] at the altar while offering the sacrifice, so that God may be inclined to keep the Honorable Brother healthy and unharmed for many years for our comfort.

Would the Honorable Brother convey my hearty greetings to the Highly Honorable Lady, his wife, and to the remaining esteemed members of the family. And would he also give a friendly kiss to the little grandson.

I do not have more now, it seems better that I have sent those things which I could write, than if the seeds of home or those of this place here should not flower better. Perhaps I shall be of more service elsewhere. I entrust myself into your fraternal support. It seems appropriate for me now to retire to my bedroom. Next Sunday, after Mass, I might have more topics on which I might speak. [etc.]

Ellwangen, June 27, 1728
My Highly Honorable and Noble Brother’s
most submissive servant and brother,
Philipp Segesser

P.S.: The Reverend Father Troxler sends his greetings to the Honorable Patrons. When there is an opportunity, please share that with them, for which I would be very thankful. How is the Father
Rector doing?
Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser II. Ellwangen, April 5, 1729.

Highly Honorable and Noble Brother,

May the Honorable Brother not be surprised that I am sending so few pages. I am late [in my writing] and seem to inconvenience you. If I were closer, I would extend, not diminish, the celebration of the Eucharist. I hope that the Honorable Brother has spent a healthy season of Lent with his dearly beloved wife and children; likewise I pray that the Easter holidays be very pleasing, very healthy, indeed, ever renewing your thoughts of me. May God keep the Honorable Brother safe and sound, and may he keep all the others safe right up to their old age.

I do not have interesting things to write, because even though I hear many interesting things in the confessions, nevertheless, I do not dare to make these things public. I will say that during the past month I have been occupied in missions, therefore I could not waste any time and kept very busy. However, I came home while the Provincial Rector Father was still there. In fact, I led him there. I myself did not know that I was able to demonstrate [my missionary skills] so purely before and afterwards, but he thinks that I should still be called through letters from Rome for an overseas
mission. Whether this will be the case, God alone knows, not I, so let the will of God happen. The Honorable Brother will be able to understand many things from the German mothers [?].

On that very occasion I asked the Father of the Missions [the College], that is, Ignatius Stauffert, whether I might get some money to send to the Honorable Brother so that he might be able to repay others with it for me. He willingly agreed, since he was always very devoted to me. Therefore I gave the money to him, which they refuse to take in these lands. I sent it for a rather small charge. I know, it is worth more in the fatherland [Switzerland], therefore the Honorable Brother may wish to send as many kaiserliche tugaten [imperial ducats] to me as he can with this money, which he is likely to acquire from the Father Procurator (he might consider to invite him for a visit, especially since he was a Professor and came to Lucerne). They refused to take the Philippine [Spanish] gold pieces for two florins, a Genoese gold coin for only six florins. The Turkish gold coin they altogether refused to accept because they thought it should be sold for twenty-five baceis. Indeed I thought, the people of Ellwangen were unworthy of so old and good coins, hence I sent them back to the Master Brother, who knows how to get a better price for them.

If the Father Ignatius might be willing to acquire Caesarian [imperial? or German?] gold coins, then he would do me a favor; otherwise the Master Brother should speak to the Father Procurator, and he should give them to the same man, so that he may transfer them through the Father Procurator of the Province here to me at the first opportunity. I hope that it will happen soon because I need it so that I may pay some business debts. Of course, once I will have been assigned for the Incidas [American Indies?], I will be forced to have brought my affairs to an end.

May the Master Brother advise the Sister Maria Anna in Domicella [in the convent] about the marriage, what will seem best; I do not remember that I ever saw him sprinkled [idiomatic: may be in the meaning of: at a loss]. If the Honorable Brother should by chance be present as well, as I hope, he may wish to watch out for the Father Provincial, which I hinted at in my mother tongue [German], lest he say anything about the future disposition, especially in Tirol, of course, unless he himself has brought about the opportunity. He should do what I insinuated in my mother tongue: let him not speak to the Father Provincial about that. Let him not think that I want to suborn myself, so that they may intercede on my behalf. For I solicit neither disposition opposite to the will of God, nor against the wishes of the Superiors. Meanwhile, I am still able to endure everything here. He who will free me, when it is time, is in the Heavens. I entrust myself into your thoroughly exceptional brotherly benevolence.

Ellwangen, April 5, 1729.

Most Devoted brother
of the Highly Honorable and Noble Brother
Philipp Segesser

If there is time, it may be possible [for me] to send the letters of introduction [or recommendation?], that I had asked for regarding the Indian mission, which he [you?] wanted to have.
Letter 19

Letter to his mother Maria Catharina Segesser, born Rusconi, also to Brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser and the sisters. Ellwangen, May 6, 1729 (Neg. 51792)

 Neg. ASM 51792  
PA 437/585  
No. 19

Most honorable Mother and Juncker Brother, Married sisters and unmarried Sisters, It should not be surprising that it took me such a long time to write which is not my usual habit. The circumstances prevented me, and what God has willed, is what has happened. I know very well that the honorable mother, the brother, and the dearest sisters submit themselves to the will of God completely. So I report that the day before yesterday I got my orders to go to Munich, in order to become outfitted [or to get clothing] and from there depart in the next few days in the middle of May with my fellows brothers in God to Genoa and from there onto India.108 Because of the shortness of time I cannot write any more. Therefore I give thanks one thousand-fold for the honor, grace, and good deeds will that I have received from my childhood on, from my beloved parents.

God will recompense you for it, I cannot do it. Now it came to pass what a couple years ago the most blessed Mother of God in the St. Mary’s College in Ingolstadt foretold. I had a vision that the Virgin Mary nodded her head twice, as she had already done to the venerable Jacob Rem. She showed it to me as well because I had intensively prayed to her that she would show me whether I would go to the West Indies or not. This happened during Father Gillis’s Mass, whom I served at both altars. By the way, I would like to ask now that the Juncker Brother would be so graceful for the last time in this world, and without any delays send me those things that I had requested, especially the whole library of philosophy and theology, and the other things, as I have already written, in the travel trunk, well packed, to Genoa and address it to the local college there. You may also include those items that you yourself at home deem to be useful for me. God will compensate you for everything, which I will not be able to do. Would the Juncker Brother report to me in Genoa through a special letter (since I am traveling to Munich tomorrow) how and to whom the things were entrusted. I wish my Honorable Mother, Juncker Brother, and everybody else a long life. We will meet again in the next life [Heaven].

Please give my regards to everyone both to those who live within the city as well as to those who live outside so that I will successfully achieve my goal that I do many good things wherever God calls me. I cannot write anymore right now, and even this one is composed hastily. I hope you will forgive me that.

Incidentally, everything stays as I promised. As long as I live, etc., I recommend myself to everyone.

Ellwangen, May 6, 1729
Philipp Segesser

Genoa

This is a major port and trading center in north-western Italy and the capital of the eponymous province with a very long and rich history. In 1569, by a decree of the Senate of Republic of Genoa, the various university colleges were incorporated into the schools run by the Jesuits. The Jesuits settled near the old Church of San Girolamo Del Rosso, and enlarged their premises by buying some land on which to house their College and schools. They were expelled, however, already in 1773.

Letter 20

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Genoa, June 9, 1729 (Neg. 51796-51797)

Neg. ASM 51796
PA 437/585
No. 21

Highly Born Juncker Brother,

Both highly appreciated brotherly letters from the 21st and the 24th I have received well yesterday one day after I had arrived in Genoa in good shape. I have learned from both that I can rest assured to receive also in the future the far-reaching care which gives me comfort, knowing that I will not be forgotten in the coming years. I have also gained hope that the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all other siblings, just like me, completely submit under the will of God. I must admit that the permit for the departure arrived very quickly. But I guess that the Father Provincial had received orders from Rome, which were then suddenly changed. But we had already started our journey, so we were supposed to wait for new orders from Germany here in Genoa. The reason, as Father Procurator Tambini, the Father Minister in the professed house, told to Father Ambrosius, who is also the Procurator of the Indian Missions, is that no ship is soon going to America because the cargo of those that arrive in Sevilla is not unloaded for a while, hence cannot be loaded with new wares. Once, however, the conflicts between the great lords will be cleared on one side, or will be settled, it still might happen that I, together with Father Carl, could gain some time and leisure to visit my most beloved Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all beloved relatives. Surely, I would not know, if I had to wait for a year or more here, or in Sevilla, what might happen, since I have already submitted, after so many years, complaints to my superiors. But they have always very politely rejected it all. I must conclude that it is God’s will which will be fulfilled. I hope that Honorable Mother has received the letter that I took to the post office in Trento.
The money order has been paid out to me yesterday in Spanish *dublen* [doubloons]. I have signed for the first time in Italian. I do not know how to make up for so many good deeds and generosity, both toward the Honorable Mother and Honorable and Juncker Brother, and toward all the other beloved siblings, Ladies Sisters-in-law, [Neg. 51797] and the Honorable Canons in the cathedral who have all demonstrated their infinite generosity to me. I believe that they did this in order to participate in the rewards which perhaps the omnigracious God will grant me and them because of my good will, in whose honor they contribute so strongly to this God pleasing enterprise. Certainly God will reward such efforts to support its public esteem by those who are happy to donate much money both with temporal and with eternal thanks. I will add to that to the utmost. If I might die beforehand, I hope to demonstrate my thankfulness to the Heaven.

I have not yet heard anything of the travel trunk, so it would be necessary that the Juncker Brother urge the merchant immediately and inquire to what merchant this trunk might have been addressed [shipped], insofar there are hundreds here each month, and also those coming from Hungary, which are all inspected. Moreover, Father Tambini says that the entire city consists of Hungarians, so it would be impossible to find out such matter without knowing the name of the specific merchant. I hope to write a report soon because we might not depart so quickly from Genoa because there is only one other German missionary here apart from us, the others are still expected to arrive. [To write that report] will please me, because a lot of things have happened. I should probably not write it to avoid causing you even more worries, but since I feel quite well here except for a certain weakness that results from the almost unbearable heat that makes me sweat all day.

There was a big accident with my trunk, since when we travelled from Pavia to Cordona, we had to cross the river Po. When the *viterino*, or ferryman, wanted to drive with the coach onto the ship, both the horses and the ferryman could not handle the weight, and everything fell into the water, and neither horses nor ferryman was to be seen. Hence, the chaise, or coach, together with all the luggage, sank into the water. So I suffered shipwreck without even having seen the sea. But they pulled out the coach after half an hour, after they had helped the *viterino* and the horses. You can easily imagine how it looked like in my trunk.

Everything was ruined, only little was preserved, and I could not unpack anything onto the street and dry it. I was only concerned how I could dry the wet texts that I regarded as important for me. Everything made out of iron was rusted, the rosaries and images, the books and such matter were all badly damaged and gray. It seems God wants to send me properly as an apostle across the ocean without a second set of clothing, without shoes and socks etc. *sine pera sine calceamentis* etc. [Latin: without wallet and without shoes], just as I watched this game at the embankment, without me or anyone else able to do anything, except for God, while I thought: *Dny [Dominus] dedit, Dominy abstulit sit nomen Dni [Domini] benedictum* [Latin: The Lord gives, the Lord takes away; may the name of the Lord be blessed], etc. He can return it again, and so He did, may God be praised, through my most beloved Honorable Mother’s generosity, and that of the most beloved siblings, who have replaced it all, although I cannot obtain here what I have lost and what was ruined. May God protect me and my companion in the future from such accidents! God does as it pleases Him, and so I want it as well. I take even more comfort with the thought of the arrival of the shipped travel box, the poorer I have become.

May the Juncker Brother keep well all the other things, writings, notes, music instruments, etc. that were in the travel trunk, so that they can be of use for the young nephew, and will not fall into the hands of any other person. May the Juncker Brother also be so kind to extend my thanks to
all who have done something good to me, and thank especially Honorable Mother. I will recompense it all to the utmost of my abilities through my prayer and offerings of Holy Masses.

[Neg. 51796] Just as I am writing the last lines, I have received a letter from a merchant in Milan who writes that he was supposed to receive my travel trunk, but that it has been detained by the city official. I have therefore requested Father Procurator, who runs the professed-house that he may request it to be released, but he did not want to take this on because he himself has been cheated repeatedly in such matters. Particularly they did not want to let pass through the trunks, because it was filled with spiritual and objectionable religious things.

I hope not that my brother put any objectionable things into the chest. I have therefore written to the confessor of the Governor, who is German, and who has talked with me recently in a friendly manner, while I was traveling. I hope that he will be able to get released the chest and then forward it soon. The merchant’s name is Giuseppe Gattipe, through whom I have also received the money order.

See, Honorable Brother, hardship is everywhere, and I don’t know how to understand it. Next time I will report more. My regards to Honorable Mother and to everyone else. I recommend myself especially in brotherly love.

Genoa, June 9, 1729.

I submit myself under the most beloved Brother,
the most dedicated brother,
Philipp Segresser, etc.
Letter 21

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Genoa, June 21, 1729 (Neg. 51798-51799)

Neg. ASM 51798
PA 437/585
No. 22
Latin

Highly Honorable and Noble Brother,

How much work the Honorable Brother has put up with on my account! How many labors he has taken up and has completed! Who will please as much? By all means, God. I shall endeavor to repay as much as I can. I took a box, so that he will be able to understand in the mother tongue. I shall write more on another occasion, I am arranging things to prepare for my sea journey. I am sending a little bundle of letters to the Highly Honorable Sir Brother. If the post has to be paid for somewhere else, they will pay the balance, as well as those to whom I wrote at my last opportunity for their comfort. Would you please extend my greetings to the Honorable Wife a thousand times. I wished I could touch the little grandson with a kiss, whom I am never likely to see again in this life, unless he himself will come by chance to me in his own lifetime, who knows, or by chance I may return to my paternal home at some time, provided that I will be sent to Rome for the sake of business. But my hope about this is very remote, nor do I think that I should hope for such great inconveniences to my travels. Those final things, which I recently sent, the Honorable Brother will surely receive to whom I wish to send the best goodbye, and I command myself into your fraternal support. Genoa, June 21, 1729 at St. Ambroggio.

Highly Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: There would have been enough time to give me some vacation from the books [teaching]. I would have probably found a secure route through Switzerland. It is as it is, everything is a gift from God. So may he continue to do it, as it pleases him, etc.
Neg. 51799

P.S.S.: If the Master Brother might want to write to me, he should send his letters to Genoa enclosed. Best regards in the meantime, until I should write otherwise another [sending it via Cadiz?] to Gadibquel in Spain. I wanted to send it to the Father Tambin. His home is dedicated to St. Ambrose and it is the Administration Building for Indian Mission, for he is the Father and the Procurator at the same time. He will certainly forward it. The Honorable Brother may wish to
disclose the same to the Father Preacher, Father Burckhardt. Still, he may wish to ask him for the indulgence for Father Tambin, which can happen in secret [?]. The Honorable Brother should wish to give the rhetoric of Father Ignatius Wagner either to no one, or on a convenient occasion, and send it to the same address in Feldkirch, with the greatest thanks added in my name. For he will find nearly everything described in my writings [etc.], with the result that the little grandson should be able never to require these in any way, and it would be better if they should be returned, lest their style be recognized by chance by anyone [etc.].

For the Highly Honorable and Noble Brother Joseph

Neg. 51799
Letter to the brother Ulrich Franz (?)

No. 1 (PA 437/586)

Not transcribed
Sevilla

Sevilla is the capital of the province of Andalusia in southern Spain, a major city with a very rich and old history. Due to the global efforts by the Catholic Church to institute its Counter-Reformation in the wake of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), Sevilla became a very monastic looking city, where the Jesuits, among many other monastic orders, had a major stake and exerted tremendous influence, both spiritually and politically, but then also as financial managers and economic leaders. The Jesuits erected their Profession House in Sevilla from 1565 to 1566, and completed it finally in 1587. The University of Sevilla was also dominated by the Jesuits until their expulsion in 1767.

Letter 22

Letter to his mother, Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi, and to the brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, September 27, 1729 (Neg. 51814)

Neg. ASM 51814
PA 437/585
No. 2

Highly Noble Honorable Mother, [Latin] Highly Noble and Honorable Graceful Brother,

I do not doubt that either Father Rector or someone else in the College will have indicated to the Honorable Mother or to the Honorable Brother that I have arrived in Cadiz after a long lasting sea voyage of 40 days. After all, I have asked the Father Provincial to do so that is, to say so in his letter to the Father Rector. I also hope that he has received my letter. In the meantime I have received the most loving letter of my Honorable Mother, dated July 6, through another missionary father who has arrived from Genoa. I got it on August 23 and it was a great consolation for my heart. I express my most dutiful thanks. With the present letter I inform the Honorable Mother, Honorable Brother, and all the other siblings how I have endured an exceedingly difficult sea voyage. The main officers of the ship considered several times whether they should not take me to the shore because only after two or three Pater Nosters after I had boarded the ship vomiting attacked me so hard that it continued almost throughout the whole night and the following day without any break. This made me despise all food and drink until we reached 30 days later the port of Cadiz. Whenever I ate something even against my own will, I felt an unbearable pain within me that would not stop until I had vomited the undigested food. At the time, however, when we [the ship] rested in the harbor of Toulon in France after we had dropped the anchor, where the captain of the ship had some business to do and therefore had turned away from the proper route, I experienced some peace and quiet. But as soon as we had departed from there, the old illness returned. You can easily imagine how fat I grew with such a life. A living skeleton was hidden in the nightgown, whereas the face was inflamed because of the great heat, which came from within and from outside. I became so weak that
I had to bind myself with a rope or a string to the ship, when it rocked and I did not want to be thrown into the air.

When we arrived in the harbor of Cadiz, we thought we would soon get to the city, but we were suddenly put under quarantine because all who are arriving from Genoa are ordered to submit themselves to it. It would have been a hard procedure if I did not have a letter from the royal confessor, who belongs to our Society, and another letter from the king to Lord Patingo the prime minister, both for my own sake and that of my companions, asking for release and favor. But this delay of ten days was my profit because as soon as the ship was not moving anymore, I found my rest and an appetite to eat and drink, which gave back strength to my feet so that I could walk alone to the city, although on the ship I had not been able to walk for three steps without help. Now [Neg. 51815] I am pretty much well again, although I will have to go through the same suffering soon again because I will have to travel from Cadiz to Sevilla with my companions and many others. That journey took us two days and one and a half nights. The first day I did not suffer from vomiting, and I felt good while we spent time on the sweet water, and suffered nothing but from the summer heat. Thus things happened with me on this short sea voyage. But what will happen with me when we will have to travel for at least 3 or 4 months to America, which would have started for me soon, if not the other travel companions had prevented that because of their late arrival. To my regret and that of the others we saw with our eyes the fleet set sails five days after our arrival. We could have sailed with them, and the general [admiral?] had even invited us [to come along]. That grace we could not accept because of the other companions.

The captain of that ship on which I had travelled had been most attentive to me and displayed all his love for me. He said on numerous occasion that he would like to donate his own blood if he knew that it would help me.

We are given the hope that we will depart sometime before the end of December for Mexico, but I myself and others worry it might be an empty promise and that the journey might be postponed for a long time, which would truly be most inconvenient. In the meantime I hope that enthusiastic prayers, dedicated to asking for this goal for me and others, will achieve so much that, with God’s help, I will arrive, happily, although with difficulty, to where God has called me and my superiors have ordered me.

A few days ago I visited a big estate where I almost could imagine the Buchhof estate [back home], if only the company would have been the same [as at home]. The estate belongs to the missionaries as private property. It is entirely surrounded by vineyards and olive tree forests. Three days ago I was sent to town to visit those who still have to study. There are hardly thirty of us staying in one house because we are all foreigners, except for one brother who takes care of the kitchen. I hope the Honorable Mother and all the beloved relatives are in good health, whom I command myself thousand-fold and of whom I think often. Do not forget [to send] Francisca [my regards]. If Catharina Baumwart is still alive, I would like to ask for her prayer, upon which I want to rely. I have found the Xavier rip111 already.

I express, once again, for this and other good deeds my dutiful thanks. As to the Mass vestment I hope the Honorable Mother will take care for it as much as necessary. You will be rewarded for it both here and there [in the afterlife]. I can only hope to be able to wear it at the first Mass. But I will rather send my protective angel for whom it will be more fitting than for myself. The Father Provincial has written to me that he was greatly Honorable by the Honorable Mother and visited her in her house. He saw with his eyes what she is preparing for me. He only reports, however, about the wine. Regarding the Honorable Aunt Prioress I owe once again my thanks, but
I have to put this grace to those that I have already richly received. I would like to be able to pay back a little such grace through my spiritual service. I will simply do what is possible for me. God will add the greater reward.

The reason why I have sent this letter to the Juncker Brother is because I hope that this way the letter will reach its goal more safely. Moreover, Honorable Mother will not be displeased to know that the Juncker Brother has news about my whereabouts. When the letters have to travel so far, they get very expensive if I have to send them twice. I will compose an extensive account of my travels when I will have arrived in Mexico. That one I will send [first] to the trustworthy Father Provincial, and he will send it to the Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother. Before we will depart from here, I will still send some news.

Herewith I beg the Juncker Brother, cui me praerimisae imperfissimè commendo, uti et amatissimo uxori Nepotulo, ac toti familiae [Latin: to whom, before all things, I commend myself most humbly, and so to the dearest grand-son of his wife and also to the entire family] that he deliver this letter to the Honorable Mother, and give me some joy with a response letter. To the Court Preacher I am sending my humble regards. à quoties Rectissimum[?] Ipsius occurrit Nomen ! Sed et toties gratissima ejusdem memoria. ec. [Latin: as often as I remember his honorable name, so many times I have the most pleasing memory of him] and submit myself, as ever, to the motherly and brotherly graces. Staying in Spain, or Sevilla, September 27, 1729,

My Highly Born Honorable Mother’s
most loyal son,
Philipp Segesser, S.J.

P.S.: Revmo. D.no Canonies et D.no Fratri
Podoco demississimam commendationem [Latin: A most humble commendation to the Highly Honorable Sir Canonsand to the Father Podoco] etc.
Letter 23

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, October 18, 1729 (Neg. 51800-51801)

Neg. ASM 51801
PA 437/585
No. 23

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

I hope that the Juncker Brother has received a letter that was actually addressed to him, but in the substance to the Honorable Mother, and that was sent from Genoa via Milan. You can learn from it where I am staying right now, which will serve both you at home as well me who is far away as a consolation. Yesterday a former soldier came to me who originates from St. Gallen and had converted to Catholicism, as he claims. Since he has hardly learned any Spanish so far, hence could not submit his application at the proper offices, he begged me intensively to set up such an application, which he then could submit to the arch-bishop and the king. He wanted to receive a safe conduct with which he would have been able to travel safely through Spain, which would make it possible for him to encounter more generous people. He will go to Santiago de Compostella to Saint Jacob.

From there he intends to visit the Holy Virgin Mother in Einsiedeln [Switzerland]. This provided me with the opportunity to give him this short letter with the purpose that he then would send it to Lucerne, if he were not to get there himself. He promised me to do so.

I think if he gets there, it will be very good because in that case my most beloved Honorable Mother, Juncker Brother, and also the other most beloved siblings will receive news where I am staying right now at this point fairly well, in the Indian [American] Hostel in Sevilla that was especially built for the Indian [American] mission. It was erected in the Spanish style that is, like every other building in the city, pretty old-fashioned in the Gothic design. I wish the best of luck to this letter to reach you all whom I do not think I will ever see again in this world, if the journey will actually begin next New Year’s, as we have been told. Altogether 90 missionaries will assemble, and some more. That can tell you how closely packed we will be in two or three ships, next to some other strangers, the sailors, officers, soldiers, merchandize, and then also our not insignificant luggage. May God protect us all according to His divine will.

I would like to find the opportunity, or rather the assurance that this man whom I entrust this letter, will surely get to Lucerne. I have assembled here one or the other piece which the Juncker Brother would like to see and to own, but one cannot, as God knows, foresee when he will arrive and how long the journey of such a beggar will take. Here we have a really beautiful garden nicely planted with citrus trees and pomegranates, almost of the same height as the pear and apple trees at home, at which the fruit hang like grapes. They begin to ripen early. Of this fruit I have eaten so much during the journey, more than ever in my life, I think, insofar as they serve it at breakfast as soup and at lunch as a separate dish. They are pretty strong, but the wine [made out of them], is not
a Madeira, or nutmeg, wine, one of the Spanish wines that one drinks back in the fatherland. Instead, it has a smell similar to brandy. That is why I help myself with water and hardly drink a small glass of wine per day.

Here we suffer from an intolerable plague of Spanish mosquitoes, which sting our hands and faces at night so that we look mangy. For that reason I have covered my window with paper (as there are no glass windows here. There is also rarely a wall out of glass, of which I also have one in my room that is situated in our hostel.

I also have this room all to myself, whereas among the others several must share a room, like in Cadiz where we were six to seven in the classroom of one school, like soldiers that live together. This means that I at least have quiet at night. God help, when we will have to sleep or lie under the open sky at night on the trip. Of the manner, fashion, and style of Spanish cooking there is much to say, but I am afraid that I would ruin your appetite [meaning his addressees], if I were to write so unabashedly. Yesterday I went into the food cellar. There I came across all sorts of things that belong to some place else.

The cook’s cap wrapped in fur was next to the butter, or “ancken,” as we say. Here we have also foreign craftsmen, [foreigners] because no Spaniard would perform such a service, or work himself. The farmer in the field will even wear his coat while plowing so that he can present himself as Spanish. For that reason no one appears without a suit, except for the officers and soldiers when they walk through the streets. Perhaps they do this so that they can put their noses into the coats in order to avoid the smell that you notice in the streets. When one walks throughout the city, one comes across all kinds of refuse, which they throw from their homes and which [openly] flows through the streets. The women and children all dress up like nuns, with a black veil over their head. Like some of the priests, at their skirts they have an exceedingly long tail, which washes itself very well in the above mentioned puddles of dirt. I can’t wonder enough how they can be so wasteful with their damask dresses. They must have enough money, as you find out when you must buy something.

The real de plata [silver coin] is here only as much worth as the groschen in the German Empire, although five reales are as much as one gulden [ducat]. So, it is a good thing here to sell, but not to purchase. It’s still warm here and around noon it is not nice to go out, although in general, I do not like to appear in the streets anyway.

A few days ago I visited the Archbishop and requested permission to hear confessions because some Germans have wanted to confess. He was very gracious and courteous to me, and without further questioning, which he otherwise does not neglect, he has given me and another Father the permission. Aside from costly jewelry in silver and gold I have seen nothing exceptional.

I hope the Honorable Mother is well and feels comforted, just like all the other beloved relatives. How is the Honorable sister Maria Anna doing? Is the Mademoiselle Sister Elisabeth healthy again? What else is new? Is the Father Court Chaplain still in Lucerne? What are the latest arrangements there? How is the Honorable Sister Maria Barbara? The Honorable Brother from Hoffsroff etc.?

When Juncker Brother will write to me, he should address the letter to Brother Francisco Tambini Procuratorem Missionum Indicarum etc. [Procurator of the Indian Missions] in Genoa. I will receive it when the occasion arises and then experience such comfort as I can extract from the loving letter.

My best greetings to the Honorable Mother and other
beloved relatives of the family.
Before I forget, how is my nephew?

Comeado Dne in favores pristinos muneoys [I submit myself under my Honorable (Brother) in pristine favors and gifts?]

Hispali, October 18, on the feast day of S. Luco, 1729.

The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother
Philip Segesser

I cannot read over this anymore, if I made mistakes, remember that I think half in Spanish.
Letter 24

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, December 26, 1729 (Neg. 51816)

Neg. ASM 51816
PA 437/586
No. 3
Latin

Highly Honorable and Noble Brother,

I am exceedingly pleased that the Highly Honorable Brother has finally received my letters, and that he is still writing other ones, and that he is sending them through the ordinary post, because I believed that after they were already sent from here they were delayed, for I wrote some in Cádiz, others here in Sevilla. Nevertheless I received no responses other than these very ones, which the Honorable Brother wrote on November 22, which I have obtained today, December 26, of the same year.

I ought to express the greatest thanks to the Honorable Brother for his fraternal support because nothing has pleased me more than when I observe him restoring my spirits. I congratulate him upon him having received the appointment to his office, which holds honor not because of the failing of men [corruption?], but truly because of his [own] capacity and his collected merits. God will supply the strength for administrating these and other rather great things that he will have to carry out in the future work with his own family’s approval. I should hope for such great labors for the glory of God, and on this very occasion I pray that the beginning of the new year, which is coming very soon, as well as the middle and the end may be very fortunate. Certainly, my prayer will arrive too late, but in truth, quickly enough if it is good enough: however, it will occur in a brother’s heart. Why do I not therefore write “very good?” God will certainly provide strength, and His grace, so that the Master Brother may work earnestly according to the laws of his fatherland in the canton of Lucerne for the glory of God, and so that I, likewise, may work very much on the Mexican vine for the same glory according to the law of God, so that at last, after many labors, we may come together with joy in Heaven. [Luod?] Since the Honorable Brother, with the other members of his household, has worried so much about my health, I am very embarrassed. But there is no reason why he should be sad on this account, for if I die, then I am the Lord’s. Sooner or later, death will not be absent, however much I might hope otherwise. If it were able to happen without the osenso [approval?] of God, dying would be wretched.

I do not say that the following will have to concern me, but some men were killed a long time ago by Mexican rebels in the mission, not far from that place in which Father Balthasar is now. I am only afraid [that I might die] in like manner, otherwise I am living very well. It feels like autumn, for I believe that the birds from the Swiss season of winter are coming into Spain. For my
distraction, I am caring for one very pleasing little bird in my room, we call it in the native tongue [German] *rötel* or *rotköpfli* [robin], not *füseli* [a pun that cannot be translated], which is such a tame animal that it came to me when it was born, since it was accustomed to eat from a Mexican. Look! How much comfort! [The following sentence is in German] The finches and the titmice, even the blackbirds make their voices heard mightily in our garden, where the other fathers sometimes catch one. Meanwhile, I am keeping myself busy in the Spanish language, in which I toil much and I perspire ever so much, since it is not winter here.

The Honorable Sir Brother will certainly find a convenient occasion for sending letters. I also am using this occasion, for the Father Procurator *Liutensis* (?), who received my letters from the Bishop, told me that the Bishop himself wrote the same thing, that I should send my letters added, or if I am writing in . . . (Neg. 51817) the fatherland, which I may always wish to send there. I have experienced such great favor at length from another Spanish Legate, Don Barretti, while I was teaching him to be ordained, when he offered himself for the purpose of carrying letters written to the Honorable Father (a happy memory). I might hope that I would be able to leave in the same ship with that archbishop, but in truth I am afraid, and besides we shall leave later than he, once he has left the entrance, for He Himself will leave with the Gauls, as we call them, but we shall leave in the royal ships, which, as it happens, are going to depart from the shore later.

However, he told the Honorable Patingus, our superior, that we would all leave on these days at the same time. On another occasion I wrote more and other things. I was [subsequently he switches to German, and so also switches in grammar] The Juncker Brother could recommend me with the Honorable Legate, so that the latter could recommend me here, which would provide me with many opportunities to see numerous things here, which I can otherwise not visit since I am not known here. The Honorable Brother will certainly understand what I am aiming at [back to Latin from here]. Regarding the rest, I recently saw a procession, the sort which one would clearly be amazed at because of its adornment, everything gleamed with gold and silver that I am still praising very much on account of its Phrygian style, which I described in a more flowing manner in another account. Two or three bishops will still go with us into Mexico, as I hear, but in truth it would perhaps be more convenient for us if we went alone, as we are many with too little [help?]. In that respect, my baggage is delaying us. Or if it impedes you to unfold these things (may the Honorable Brother baptize the retinue), I have rolled up and re-rolled everything to be turned upwards and downwards. I would have found many buyers for these things, except for gold and silver, if they had been for sale. I hope that I will do this with the others in this very season [Inerum?]. If my allotted space does not contain everything of silver, certainly it will contain everything of souls, hence I ought to seek out another man, who is not able to fill up his trunk so that he may permit me to put my things into his as well. For each missionary here is allotted one chest of a prescribed measurement, and neither more nor larger chests are permitted, unless someone wishes to pay out of his own pocket. However, the Honorable Brother may have to pay for the chest which he sent all the way to Genoa for me, and then all the way to Veracruz for at least twelve doubles. This is the amount which the shipping of this very large chest costs! There is a lot of money in this land, and all of the goods sell for a very high price, so is it not good to buy many things.

The Gallic [French] Legate celebrated the birthday of his new son, Delphius, in a very sacred manner some weeks ago, he adorned fires [now in German: or fireworks], the like of which I have never seen before, yet he furnished still greater things on the day when the Queen completed her childbirth. In particular, we saw illuminations on the rampart of the Cathedral, which, when illuminated, altogether seemed to burn. I saw *soltantes parcules* [many things ?], very beautifully
arranged at the feast of the Immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

That which is celebrated here in a very solemn manner, in the Cathedral before the Venerable Sacrament, is the wondrous deed which one can see by viewing, those watching, in truth it is a pleasing worship, [?.??.] the secret rite of the altar, I would not have believed it if I had not seen it. Next, in the middle of the city, a hunt for such great forest dwellers will be held, certainly worthy of belief, but we cannot be admitted to the spectacle yet.

I grieve a lot the death of the Honorable Uncle Father Charles at the Holy Place of the City. In truth, who was he, why did God dismiss this mass [for his sake] in this way, perhaps [cut?] for his health, the one for whom I wished, I commended for a harmonious occasion, as I also did for the Revered Honorable Secretary Berona.

I am glad that my little grandson in giants’ steps is following the footprints of his Highly Honorable and Noble Honorable Parent. He himself is now riding on a long hobby-horse [?], while I am riding on an entirely small donkey. I shall see him riding with pleasure [in German again: there are so many who ride on asses], of course on land after this sea voyage, where we shall make a journey on mules or donkeys all the way to Mexico. The Honorable Brother may wish to send the enclosed letters to the Honorable Burckhardt, for I am using this occasion, as the Honorable Brother advised.

I send a very great wish for the health of the Honorable Wife, and I embrace my little grandson with a thousand kisses. I entrust myself completely to the Honorable Brother. Sevilla, December 26, 1729.

The Highly Honorable and Noble Brother’s
most submissive brother
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: If I come upon any occasion, I will send something which I received from one of the Father Procurators. Perhaps it will please the Noble Lady Wife, it came from Sina [China?] etc.
Letter 25

Letter to his mother, Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Sevilla, December 26, 1729 (Neg. 51818)

Neg. ASM 51818  
PA 437/586  
No. 4

Highly Born Honorable Mother,

Your most loving and motherly letter from November 22 that I received on December 26 against all hopes because I had waited for such a long time, without receiving anything. It got here early in the morning included in a package sent to Father Procurator from Lusto outside of Madrid before matins. The motherly letter was delivered there. I learned from it that my most beloved mother is doing well, as do all the other heart-beloved relatives. I wish that the omnibenevolent God may grant such beloved content to the complete satisfaction for everyone. I wish this particularly at this moment when many loudly announce this wish for grace and welcome it, although this will really come too late. At this very moment I am thinking of the Honorable Mother, which I do all the time anyway because it is my filial duty upon my promise. Hence I did not forget the Honorable Mother on Saint Catherine’s Day, sending her my heart, in which she can perceive my filial affection (I also keep in mind all my other beloved siblings). So, I am telling the Honorable Mother highest thanks for the great care for me, especially for a holy prayer and meditation that she did for my benefit. God will be pleased with that, considering that this will help me to preserve the necessary strength to further God’s honor and the well-being of the peoples. Thereby the Honorable Mother will also be able to do something good among the heathens, for which, however, there is no bigger reward to be expected than eternal blissfulness.

By the way, if you might get wrong news regarding [my] sickness or bad condition, do not worry about that but leave it all up to the dear God, who has already foreseen everything since eternity how things will develop with me. I hope that His will is that I will later get to America to help those abandoned peoples. Yes, this will happen, even if thousands of hindrances were to emerge. If He has decided that I should die, the world will not go under for that reason. His will be done, which will be the same as mine, and God will not be displeased with my good intention. That is all that I am asking for, to serve for God’s grace and to die as a saved person. This temporary existence is very short, and everything is uncertain. After this life follows the eternal life. [Neg. 51819]

Now God be praised! I am quite well, and although many missionaries have assembled here and in Cadiz, making living conditions rather crowded, I have my own room along with a small attached room in which I study the Spanish language. At this time it is pleasant to live here because we do not have snow or any noticeable cold; instead the gardens are filled with plants that are growing green. But something bad will happen upon the good. how would we otherwise earn access
to Heaven? If only I can survive the crossing of the ocean, then it would be easier for me to strive for God’s grace. I do not worry about anything else, since I know how to cope with people, a grace for which I thank God dutifully.

The transferred money I will use as the need arises. I completely spilled a glass of [Danziger] Goldwasser because a little worm ate away the skin lid. I worry that perhaps something like that might happen to us on the long journey. I keep a close watch over the remaining glasses. I was delighted to get some news from my dear siblings, I wish that everything happens everywhere what the divine will requires, and also what your blessedness needs. Act carefully and carry out the business well, which is very important. I will also take this to heart, as it has happened so far. This development with Ludger went quite alright, if it is God’s will and his calling, then he can possibly also be promoted in another province and maybe even better there.

I myself would have preferred the Jost Ranury because it seems to me that one day he will be fit very well into the Jesuit order to his own comfort. If I had both of them here, I would not need to do much to put them to good use, although there is a big difference between the German and the Spanish Jesuits, one compared to the other, as everywhere, but at one place more than at another. I would have liked to write to the Honorable Aunt Asistentin, as well as to the Honorable Canon of the Cathedral, but it was impossible because I did not want to abuse this opportunity [perhaps: to write to the mother], and the mail is extremely expensive and uncertain since I do not get any news regarding those letters that I sent from Cadiz. I regret [to hear] that the Father Preacher from Lucerne is going to Constance and hence rob the Honorable Mother of his comforting sermons. But this is his good fortune, and should not be prevented. However, he has good reasons not to forget the Honorable Mother. Hopefully another will substitute for him in that position. If that is not going to happen, keep in mind that if we have to forgo the own son, we can also forgo other people. I do not know to report anything certain about my departure because people say at times something black, at other times something white about it. Some gave us hope that we would depart at the beginning of January, but now they project the journey for March, before which certainly nothing will happen. Others believe that the journey will not begin until next May, or will be postponed until August, or will not happen at all. I do not know how much time will pass.

Before I will depart, I will certainly report to Honorable Mother about it. In the meantime may the Honorable Mother keep myself and all the other dear siblings in her prayers, help them in motherly care and urge them to do the right things. I hope that they will also observe their filial duties in the best possible way. I embrace them fully in brotherly love and send them thousand greetings together with strong recommendations to observe their holy piety. The same I ask you to let know the Honorable Aunt Asistentie, the Honorable Aunt im Bruch [convent in Lausanne], the Father Henrich Sonderbar in Sursee, for his Holy Mass offering etc. etc.

I submit myself, however, to the motherly grace and favor, always remaining all filial, your most loyal son
Philipp Segesser, S.J., etc.
Sevilla, December 26, 1729.
Soc. Jesu ec.

P.S.: To Francisca and all other acquaintances friendly greetings, etc.
P.S.S.: My regards to the Father Sixth Preacher, and to all other friends in the College, etc.

I wish the Honorable Mother all the best for the function of being a leader of the association at the Holy Mass. I hope that she will be able to carry out this office well, etc.
Letter 26

Letter to his mother Catharina Segresser, née Rusconi. Sevilla, Jan. 20, 1730 (Neg. 51822-51823)

Neg. ASM 51822
PA 437/586
No. 6

Highly Born Dearest Honorable Mother,

I hope that the Honorable Mother will have received the letter from the Spanish Bishop of Cartagena, which I sent in response to the one that I received by same way, and through whom I also send the [present letter] at this opportunity. It would make me especially happy to learn that she is in good health and enjoys a well-being, which I do not want to doubt. I wish a healthy and well-earned time of Lent with the present letter to the Honorable Mother. I can easily imagine that the present letter will not reach you much earlier. I can only wish that this letter will not get lost so that the Honorable Mother will keep me in her prayers from now until the next three or four months when I will be on the ocean.

So all the preparations for the ship that I and my companions will board are being done so that we can depart together with the galleons, if I am to believe the news that I have received from the Port Saint Maria. I hope similarly to be called upon to go with the others who are still here in Sevilla in a few days, insofar as yesterday a few have already left from here who are destined to travel with the galleons to Quito and have gone to the port.

We will request from the local archbishop a Mass in Spanish before the departure, to which, however, we Germans cannot contribute much, except to listen to some confessions. [Neg. 51823] Due to a lacking skills in speaking [Spanish], which will be acquired only in the course of time. I am sending to you Honorable Mother, with this letter and at this opportunity, a piece of cloth [?] which I received from the Father Procurator of the Philippine Islands He gave it, on which a Jesus Child is painted, to me as a sign of his particular friendship. It is said to be good against and a grace-filled treatment of headache. If you bind it around the head, then it can be useful for Sister Barbara, who is often suffering from this illness. The other one I am sending to Honorable Aunt Asistentia in the Hail Mary convent, to which should be added two such [fasas] because of the many good deeds that I have received from her. I know this well, and the Honorable Mother will certainly approve.

Although they are in appearance small things, they are highly appreciated in this country. And they will be the more liked in so far as they come from distant countries and are a continuous reminder of myself. I hope that the Juncker Brother will pass on to the Honorable Mother as well as to the others the little things that I have determined for each, and to explain the whole matter in detail.

Should he not have the time to translate into German the recipe that I have sent and that I had translated from Spanish into Latin, he should give it to a respected [well known] Jesuit who will
certainly find the time to do this favor for her.

I did not want to send the Honorable Mother such a Chinese parasol or wiederedel\textsuperscript{17} because I know well that she prefers to leave such vanity to the younger [people]. I have gotten those as gifts partly from my superiors [and] partly from Father Governor of the Phillipine Islands that border China. These items had been imported there by Chinese merchants, who do business in the mentioned islands.

9 to 10 years ago such a thing was has sold for 7 thaler German mint and even more. Now they are less expensive and easier to get. Nevertheless, one does not see many of the same here. You should not hit them on the wall\textsuperscript{118} because they contain quite a lot of marzipan. I would have sent Francisca one of the same, if I had not feared she would not accept it or would reject it, just as she reject the offer of becoming the city counselor’s wife.

Until now I have not seen any snow or ice, although through the night it is pretty cold: Nightfall is at 5 o clock and extends to 7 in the morning. During the days it is as warm as the days are in May in Germany and because of that beautiful flowering bushes can be seen at the present moment. Perhaps this is the last letter that I send to the Honorable Mother from this part of the world. And therefore it will take quite some time during which Honorable Mother will not receive any news from me. I will make up for it as soon as the occasion arises.

I submit myself to under the motherly grace and remain dutifully your son Phillip Seggesser, J

P.S.: The Masses of last year have all been read.
To everyone as always my brotherly regards.
I also send my greetings to Francisca as above.
Letter 27

Letter to his uncle Jost Ranutius Segesser. Sevilla, January 20, 1730 (Neg. 51824-51825)

Most Reverend Honorable Canon, Honorable Kinsman and Patron [col.me],

Before I will leave not only my dear fatherland, but also all of Europe behind, it is necessary that I bid a final good-bye to the Most Revered Honorable Patron in this letter, and that I do not commend each one [of the other Canons] for his kind favors in a slow manner. After I had completed my journey, a very difficult one, especially on the sea,119 I spent some time in Cádiz, then some in a particular villa in the [Jesuit] Indian Mission to recover my strength, then for a long time here in Sevilla to learn the Spanish language more thoroughly. The greatest part of which, since God is helping me, I comprehend. I am being called with my companions to the port of St. Maria, which is nearly two days away, and located outside of this region, in Cádiz, which means that we can expect another voyage on the sea in the near future.120 Nearly one hundred missionaries will have convened there, some destined for menica [America? Domenica?], some for the Philippines, and some for enito [Orient, from Spanish oriente?]. I am continuing on to Mexico, just as had been originally arranged according to the command that I had received from Rome. And therefore, because I must leave Europe behind, and with it all of my dearest friends, I am writing to the Reverend Honorable Kinsman from this part of the land and I embrace him one last time. I give thanks, as much as I am able for every bit of goodwill and favor, for very many good deeds, and for the future I pledge with this letter that I will give sacrifices to the Virgin Lady on your behalf [?].

I am mindful of your favors, and although I will be in another part of the world, let me assure you that I will never forget my Reverend Honorable Kinsman; instead I will make him a [spiritual] partner in all of my good deeds, if I should, in fact, be able to do something good. I will also be mindful of the benefits that I received from the Honorable Amita Surlax [?], to whom I wish to be commended as earnestly as possible, if the Most Revered Honorable Canon should by chance come to Italy. [Neg. 51825]. I sent to my Honorable Brother (whom I entrust, together with his whole family, in every possible way to the Most Reverend Honorable Kinsman as if to a caring parent, and I appeal to his unwavering benevolence, begging that he take it upon himself to assist him and all the others, hoping that also Reverend Honorable Brother Hochdorffy will provide good advice), some so-called Ignatius beads121 together with the information about their virtue and application, in the hope that they might, by chance, be able to be a benefit, in which I would rejoice very much. Then I would also be greatly delighted that I would have been useful to my kinsmen in distant lands.

Those things exist only in the Philippine Islands, and are highly valued. I wrote to the Honorable Brother that he should send word if in fact the Most Reverend Honorable Canon Secretary
desires them as well. I hope that they arrive intact to the Most Revered Honorable Kinsman, so that I [may] desire *Illius Insultus semricus* [Latin: unworthy and dull that I am] to be remembered in his prayers even if I should might be an annoyance to my Most Revered Honorable Patron. Perhaps it will be pleasing to him to realize that I constantly have him in my memory. I commend myself most humbly to your support and your customary benevolence.

Sevilla, January 20, 1730.

The Revered Honorable Canon’s and the Honorable Patron’s most humble grandson
Philipp Segesser S.J.
Letter 28

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, January, 21, 1730 (Neg. 51820-51821)

Neg. ASM 51820
PA 437/586
No. 5

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

I do not know how pleased you all will be with the things that I am sending since I am afraid that the sent objects will cost more in terms of the payment for the messengers and customs than they are actually worth it or useful. However, I have thought that so far such things might have been unknown in our fatherland (unless the mistress of the Honorable Diplomat of the Spanish embassy might have brought with her such items) and could be rather pleasing because they are a souvenir of your brother who is going to travel into those lands where some of those objects are coming from. I had wanted to ship them across the Mediterranean to Genoa, directly to Lord Montenach, who, when I visited him, had offered, as the captain of the guards, his loyal service, if I were not to address it to you, my brother, directly. All this in the hope that the package will be shipped more quickly and more safely through him than through the local Jesuits. He would give it to a trustworthy merchant who would then deliver it in Lucerne. I asked him personally to assume this business, assuring him that the Juncker Brother will pay for all costs, should there be any. So, when the present letter will be delivered properly, the Juncker Brother could write to the above mentioned Lord Montenach and thank him for the service that he carried out, if, of course, he also believes that it is appropriate.

First, I am sending in this little carton box that is covered on the outside with waxed linen, six wendalien that have been shipped here from China by the Fathers Procuratores on the Philippines and from the Father Provincial of the Mexican province. Both parties gave me those things a few years ago as a particular favor. Such things are being sold in Madrid for 4 to 5 thaler per piece, and even more expensively. Now they are a little cheaper, but you find very few of them here. And since I did not want to take those things back to the countries where they have come from, I wanted to send one to the Honorable Sister-in-Law, two to the two Ladies Sisters, Honorable Barbara and Honorable Maria Anna, one to the Virginal Sister Elisabeth, and one to another person as the Juncker Brother prefers. It will be a pleasant souvenir, apart from sending brotherly regards. You can see that you can use them on both sides equally since the Chinese know how to paint on both. [Neg. 51821] But you must treat this ware very carefully since they are pretty much out of glass and are good more to be looked at than to be used.

Second, I enclose two glass pieces on which a Jesus child is painted. These are made in the Philippines. I got those as well from the Father Procurator who is serving on those islands. These bands have touched a little Jesus figure that brings about miracles. The missionary fathers found it by chance when they got to the islands the first time, kept it, and presented it to the newly converted
Christians. One of these bands the Juncker Brother may give to the Honorable Mother, the other to the Honorable Aunt Asistentin, to whom I am deeply indebted. More I could not get, and one I would have liked to keep for myself because they are said to have the strength to heal the headache, if you attach them around the head. But my obligation to the Honorable Aunt forces me to do otherwise.

Third, I am sending three rings that were also produced in the Philippines. The one with the seal painted on it I got from Father Procurator of the General American Mission, and it has the same power as the other two to chase away poisonous air when you wear them or at least have them with you in a bag or in a pocket. As proof for that, they burst at times. They are made out of copper, steel, and out of the so-called tumbaga, in which rests the power. Here they have a great value, especially those that are made out of gold, steel, and the so-called tumbaga, such as the one on which the seal is painted. and which you cannot buy for less than three or four thaler. This one belongs to the Juncker Brother, the two others he can give away as he pleases. The one out of tortoise shell has the same strength, the one out of gold is certainly valuable because the above mentioned Father Procurator, who was twice the Provincial of those countries would not bring back with him dubious things. Whether they are good or not you can test in the gun powder in which they are said not to suffer any damage.

Fourth, I am sending a Chinese lock for the Juncker Brother for the money box, which will make it safe because I believe never to have seen anything comparable or bigger lock. I regret that two springs have already been lost, but I could not get anything better, and they can easily be repaired. You must put the little key in such a way into the lock that the bit turns downwards, as the experience will show you.

Fifth, I am sending just a little piece of a bezoar; I could not get more. Sixth, I am sending 25 fabas de Sancty Ignaty [Ignatius beads]; that’s the name they are called because the Holy Father revealed them to one of our brethren in the Philippine Islands, where alone they grow and can be found. They are supposed to have the power, as the Spanish text and the Latin translation (although it disagrees with the Spanish regarding the number, the translation is accurate) indicate. They are greatly desired both in Rome and in Vienna, and you have to consider it a blessing to get one or two. From that you can learn how much the Father Superior that is, the Procurator Generalis who had been twice the Provincial of those countries, likes me. Would the Juncker Brother please give 2 to the Honorable Mother, 2 to the Honorable Asistentia, to the Honorable Brother in Hochdorf, and at least one to each of the other siblings. Then the Juncker Brother and the beloved Honorable [Mother] will have left over 12, since one of them has also been put into the package for Francisca as a greeting. Concerning the other siblings I mean the one in Hermetschwil, Rathausen, Honorable Ma[ria] Barbara, Honorable Maria Anna, and Mademoiselle Isabella. If the Honorable Canon Secretary of the cathedral might express a liking, I wrote to him that the Juncker Brother would give him one as well.

Seventh, I am also sending to the Juncker Brother and for the use by the whole family an object that cannot be fully valued and by far supersedes the above mentioned fabas in their effectiveness. That is the so-called Goma de Sonóra which originates from the so-called Mexican province Sonóra, where alone it is found. It is a certain type of sap that runs out of a tree. People catch it and harden it. This is an absolutely effective means against all types of poison, whether in food or in drink, taken in either by bite and stab, [Neg. 51820] and God has created it for the best treatment of the newly converted Christians. The heathens knew about it already for a long time and healed themselves when they might have been wounded in a fight. You must know that the heathens
use to poison their arrows which they use against their enemies. If one is wounded by it, he will unfailingly die, unless he uses this anti-poison. If he uses it, he will quickly regain his health, as the Spaniards have learned who are waging war with them. One applies it in the following way: you take as much as a real de plata (like the one that I have sent, which you can use to weigh your coins), put it into warm water until it is dissolved, drink that, and the effect will be shown immediately. If it does not work the first time, repeat it, but take a little more. I do not have anything of that this time, but I am sending a half real to give you an idea of the weight of that so-called herb [in Spanish]. These included pennies are the rest of the money for my journey that is left over; here they are useless. I did not want to throw them into the sea. A beggar will probably be happy about them, whereas they would cause laughter among the people here. I beg the Juncker Brother to send the attached letter to an acquaintance in the College to avoid that they will simply stay with the porter.

The fleet on which we are supposed to travel to America has happily arrived, but the Lord General of that fleet died in Mexico. What will happen to me there? The past day [or recently] I received the favor to get an audience in the royal palace with all the high ranking dignitaries of both genders. I was then graciously given permission to leave. A few days ago I measured the city, and reached, within two hours, the outer border and circle. On my way I came across some heathen cryptas and caves where people live. I wish good luck to my letter, only God knows whether you will reach your goal. Voleat mei memor, qui nunquam non mei recordat [Latin: Let it him wish to be mindful of me, who never forgets me.]

Sevilla, January 21. 1730.
Highly Noble Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother
Philipp Segesser. S.J.

I hope that all the helpers will be paid the costs [for their work].
Letter 29

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, Januar 24, 1730 (Neg. 51826)

Neg. ASM 51826
PA 437/586
No. 8
in Latin

Highly Honorable and Noble Brother,

I do not doubt that the Honorable Brother as well as the Honorable Mother, has received my letters for the Revered Honorable Bishop of Carthage. However, I will send the next ones through another channel. There is no reason other than that I am reminding the Honorable Brother about the small chest which I have now prepared, and which will have to be sent on the next opportunity to Genoa, on whatever day it can happen soonest, and then will have to be directed straightaway to the Honorable Brother. I have entrusted that letter to the Lord of Montenach, who promised me his attention in this matter when I was visiting him, while I was in Genoa. I do not doubt that this is going to make all ist way to Genoa safely in the small chest, in which are contained various things, which I would not like to be destroyed, are kept safely for the Honorable Brother, and so also for the others, to whom these pleasing things pertain. Therefore, it seemed best to me to ask if the Honorable Brother Heribert might be going in the meantime to the same Lord of Montenach in Genoa, and if he could entrust the small chest which he has received to the same man. Or perhaps he could designate some merchant or other member of his household or a trustworthy man, who, once he had taken my small chest all the way to Genoa, would thereupon in turn take care of this small chest upon himself, which does not exceed the size of a palm in magnitude, and would take it to Lucerne. I hoped that I was going to come to the port of St. Mary in order that I might prepare myself more appropriately for the sea voyage, but I have not been called since the time when I spoke about my voyage. But the time is slipping away, and there are occasional rumors. Once one fears the departure, and then again one is looking for the very opposite, so that I can say nothing firm until I'll be able to write it. Now there is rumor flying about regarding the coming war, which will especially slow down our journey at the same time. If the Honorable Brother has received my letters, he may wish to respond to me in return, and if there is anything new in the fatherland, then he may wish to write back about it. I impart a wish for good health to the Noble Honorable Mother, to the beloved wife, and also to my Sisters, in the name of the Lord, and I submit myself for in the meantime to your fraternal favors.
Sevilla, January 24, 1730
The Highly Honorable and Noble Brother’s
most submissive brother
Philipp Segesser S.J.
Take this quickly [etc.]
Letter 30

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, February 9, 1730 (Neg. 51827-51828)

Neg. ASM 51827
PA 437/586
No. 9

Highly Born Juncker Brother, etc.,

After I had completed the first letter, but could not send off because there was no opportunity, and since I have received a letter from a former companion on my journey to Cadiz, I thought it best to request from the Juncker Brother with the present letter that he send these letters to the College, but to keep those, which contain, as I assume, the febas, until perhaps Father Provincial will arrive. These letters can be given to his vanguard horsemans, or they can be sent from Munich upon another occasion, as long as you do not entrust them to the post service. Some of them address Father Ernst. Would the Juncker Brother inquire where he can be located? If he stays in the German Empire, you can follow the same procedure as with those that are supposed to go to Munich. But if the above mentioned Father Joseph Ernst is still staying in the Wallis, where he was a year ago, would the Juncker Brother then arrange that this letter will be handed over to the messenger going to Wallis, or to someone else, if the above mentioned Father stays in a neighboring college.

If Father Provincial does not get to Lucerne soon after the arrival of this package, would then the Juncker Brother send the relevant letter with the other teaching letters that are supposed to go to the German Empire, to the college, as outlined in the first letter, or send it immediately to Constance. I will demonstrate my deep thankfulness for this careful service also in the other world, especially if the Juncker Brother would let me know soon how it all worked out, and whether the sent things arrived in good condition or whether they might not have arrived. [Neg. 51828]

I am also answering with dutiful thanks the letter that I have received on February 2 and that had been sent to me by the Juncker Brother on December 20 in the past year. The Juncker Brother writes that I should send the answer to where I had received the same letter. But I cannot do so; instead I must do it in the prescribed way because I have received the letter from the Jesuit Order’s post service. Here is nowhere to be seen a Swiss officer, since Honorable Major Niderist stays in a remote town not far from Gibraltar. So there is no better opportunity but the way as I have described recently that is, to send this little package to Lord of Montenach in Genoa, to whom, as I hope, the Juncker Brother will have written.

Every day our hopes are sinking that we can continue our travel, especially since today, against all expectations, a Pinta and an Aszogues are said to have left today for Mexico. If that is the case, it signals to us a long waiting period, and assures us that we will not depart before the departure of the next fleet. But that fleet has not yet returned. Therefore we cannot harbor any hope with that in mind. Hence the wife of the much beloved Juncker Brother should not vex me because it could easily happen that a hungry baron and a poor Juncker with a lost son might visit his
fatherland again. From day to day the little estate [that belongs to the Jesuits] becomes smaller because there is no income; instead there are many expenditures. Food and drink, God be praised, are still enough on the table, but otherwise nothing. The Juncker Brother knows already how it happens in foreign lands, I do not need to describe it. Every service by a Spaniard I have to pay for. There is nothing for free. Three days ago a Franciscan with the name Father Philipp arrived here, together with another father, for a visit. But he had hardly stepped into the house, he falls down and has died after three to four Pater Nosters. You might misunderstand that, so keep in mind that there are many Philipps in Spain. I am well, may God be praised! As long as God wants it, I will become early enough a prey for the sea, if God does not protect me especially.

My regards to the Honorable Mother and to all the others, etc.
I refer to the first letter and commend myself to the brotherly grace, etc.
Sevilla, February 9, 1730
The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother,
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: The reason why I seal all these things is that because if someone is opening the little package, no one can do anything or replace anything without breaking the seal. Yesterday I visited the archbishop who will travel with us to Mexico. He is well acquainted with the Lord Bishop of Carthage and hence I believe with the Honorable Legate Don Cornejo who could well commend me to this archbishop, in case he might write to him one day because I believe that we will stay here still for a long time. He might also be helpful regarding the sea voyage, etc.
Letter 31

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, March 7, 1730 (Neg. 51829-51830).

Neg. ASM 51829
PA 437/586
No. 10

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

On March 3 I received the letter from January 29 of this year that you sent to me via the Father Campos in Cadiz, Procurator in Quito, who probably had gotten the letter from the Bishop of Cartagena. It provided me with considerable comfort. I extend my profound thanks to the Juncker Brother for such great and best intended brotherly good deed, while those who are so far away give me not little delight and joy, what the eyes cannot see and mouth cannot say. Already two or three weeks ago the above mentioned Bishop of Cartagena traveled through her on his way to Cadiz where he ordained several of our missionaries as priests last week. I only regret that I could not be with him afterwards, otherwise he would see me repeatedly in his inn before he will depart with the galleons, as I have heard from the royal confessor, next month, whereas others will set sail only in June. I do not get any comfort from his friendly words that I have missed a lot in this short time when I had the occasion to pay him a visit. His friendliness caused me to send him the present letter as well via the above mentioned Father Procurator before I will see myself robbed of such a comfortable occasion. I only regret that I am two days travel away from him. Otherwise I would be able to talk with him directly and pay him a visit. Then I would have more liberty to bother him regarding these letters.

The Juncker Brother will [as I hope,] apologize for me regarding the same liberty to the Honorable Resident and inquire perhaps for another occasion to receive the letters and to send them out safely. However, there is no worry on my side regarding the costs for the mail because all letters by the missionaries are being paid by the mission. Some of us indeed use that opportunity. Before I forget before my continued journey, the Juncker Brother can address his letters to me130 to the Father Superior who has [even] ordered me to write that way. The label should be as follows: Al Mo. Ro. Po. el Pe. Gaspar Rodero de la Compa. de Jesus que D. gde. m’a’. Procor. Genal. de las Missiones Indicas al Puerto De S. María or à Cadiz. Although it is a well known location, it will not be necessary [Neg. 51830] to send it via Paris or Madrid because the missionaries receive their letters this way properly. By contrast, here in Spain I do not receive any letter except one sent to me from Genoa, although I have written several times to the Father Provincial and the Father Rector in Munich.

You can also communicate to Father Burckhardt in Constance, what titles have been deducted.131 He is the royal confessor and the Father Instructor de los Infantes. He was here with me last week. I wish him good luck for his journey. The entire court yesterday went to a place nine miles from here. From there they will go to Granada, as the rumor says. They assured me that we
will travel to America together with the Alsogues [Azogues], and I together with the Mexican archbishop, roughly in the month of May or June, which is my greatest desire. After all, may God be praised, I have seen enough of Sevilla, and aga hecho tantos aprovechamientos, peroque yo pudiere facilmente mendigando com-prarme el par de cada dia [Spanish: I have made so much progress that I could easily get by begging for the usual two meals a day?].

With this development of events [at court] I have also lost the opportunity to become acquainted with Margrave de las Boas, because such royal secretaries accompany the king. Of course, it is not necessary, as long as we will make progress. Who is Don Francesco de Rusia? Where does he stay? etc. The mentioning of this name reminds me to beg the Honorable Mother, whom I commend myself most humbly, for a particular from the late de Rusia. I hope she will not reject this great favor and send me one of it in the next letter through the Juncker Brother together with information about his name, where he is buried, from whom the family received those treasures. Would the Juncker Brother attach the particular with an oblate so that it cannot fall out? The Honorable Mother promised me already once something of it, but a part of it should stay with the family.

Giving blessing to the late Honorable Canon Antonius Dürler I have developed two thoughts. First, high public esteem quickly fades away, hence others have greater hope [to rise in power, perhaps?]. Second, the Honorable Brother should soon take some time to go for splendid trip with the horse. Sapienti pauc[a] [Latin: a few words for the wise one!].

As I notice, you continue to spend money for me. If I had been consulted, what design would have been best for such a painting [of myself], I would have recommended, to tell the truth to paint a beautiful avenue with cypresses and palm-trees growing on both sides, at the end the crucified savior; at his feet myself lying there in a torn pilgrimage coat as a unthankful sinner: that would be the actual opposite to Philipp the grand, a sinner doing penance among barbarian nations.

Concerning the monetary allotments that are being sent so generously from home for my Americans (which, however, also mightily please the Spaniards), I have put them all nicely together in my chest. So I have no need to entrust that money to anyone else. For that reason I have taken out the books and linen [clothes], which the others also have, and entrusted them to another missionary so to fill up his chest. Of course, I will have to pay for this service with a decent award [payment], etc. If I had had something extra, I do not know whether Father Carl would have had the hope of getting something of it. But he is a stranger for me, and he is going into another mission. There are people who quickly forget when they have received something good. He does not live here, but in Puerto de Santa Maria,132 about two days of travel from here. I am the only one here in Sevilla who comes from our province.

I serve as a guard post among those [missionaries] who must study here, so that order is kept as much as possible among such people, since the Father Superior Father Procurator de las misiones spends time here and there, and is, next to me, only a Vice Superior here. I do not doubt that the Shrovetide133 season will have passed joyfully and that the Lent season has begun in such a way that you can carry through in good health. Herewith I wish the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all the others [in Latin] a happy Easter since this letter will not reach you much earlier. Here the Shrovetide season works badly and I have hardly noticed any difference to the other seasons. But in order to get at least a Shrovetide cake, the German [missionaries] have unrelentingly requested one until I promised them one, baked with butter or lard, and not with oil.

That is a promise difficult to keep, first, because our cook does not know how to prepare anything but what is the ordinary stuff that is, every day the same, like our dear daily bread. He does
not have any other kitchen utensil for his cooking but a container out of iron in which he boils together the meat, the soup, and the cabbage. You do not see any other pot or pan in the kitchen. An earthen bowl serves him to heat the oil, if necessary. Another ceramic bowl serves him at times to boil a rice stew. There are no forks, funnels, or any kind of scoops, except for a ladle to skim off the meat. Hence it is truly difficult to bake a cake. However, I wanted to keep my promise, so I had to demonstrate my skill because it was Shrovetide. So I ordered fresh butter that had arrived from the Netherlands, well salted, then eggs, and milk, trying to fulfill my promise.

[Neg. 51829] Next, I took a ceramic pot, placed the butter in it, and put it on the heat. Since they do not have wood here, you have to cook everything on hot coals, which are imported from across the sea. First I fully melted the butter so I had a good buttery liquid, then I created a nice dough out of good white flour (here the farmer eats the best white bread; at this time of the year the fields [of wheat] are already in bloom), added milk and eggs as appropriate for a cake, which I did not have to guess. But I made the dough in the way how one makes sweet twirls. But I did not have a funnel, so I made the dough harder on the outside and yet softer inside with the eggs in the way how one prepares the cakes for mothers in childbed. At the end it worked out more or less, since one cake rose, whereas the others remained as hard as whetstones. I myself and all the others who were watching had enough to laugh about. I also created little titmice out of sage, 134 sandwiches, filled eggs, then also twirls without the screw tube [?]; so everything worked out better than good. I also had to provide them wine to drink. It was a truly a Shrovetide fun.

But I must seriously ask the Juncker Brother to find out from the Honorable Mother or his own beloved wife, to whom I send my thousand regards, how one prepares the dough for the childbed cakes, whether the milk has to be warm or cold, how many eggs, whether the dough has to be kept warm, etc. etc., or what else has to be observed, how to make the twirls, how the milky breadsticks135 or the little cheese cakes, and other easier recipes, because here they do not know of such matter. Would you please write it down very clearly, or ask Mademoiselle Sister Elisabeth, whom I send greetings from the heart, to write it down for me and send it to me before my departure so that I can teach my cook, or, in an emergency that I can help myself. Although we have fish here, they are generally not fresh because they normally come from the sea, which is two days of travel away from here. How will the situation be like in the most remote missions?

Here we have already great heat, so we cannot go out during the day. The little chest or little package I have already shipped from Cadiz, 136 so you only have to pay the carrier from Genoa, since it is all paid up to there. I hope the Juncker Brother has received the last letter and hence has sent news to the Lord of Montenach in Genoa, to whom I have addressed the little package. I hope to receive a confirmation that the latter has been properly delivered. Command myself to the brotherly grace, yours,

Sevilla, March 7, 1730
The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s most submissive brother,
Philipp Segesser. S.J.

I send my regards to everyone, etc.
Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

What was written as a postscript on the other side of the letter by the Father Bruckhardt dated February 21, of which I was informed already through the Honorable Mother’s letter, I have received. I hope that the little bell will have arrived since it was shipped from Cadiz to Genoa already quite some time ago. I hope that the Juncker Brother will have also received my last letter and will be able to provide me with the information that I have asked for. Could the Juncker Brother also tell me how one gold-plates picture frames, how to apply the primary color, and how to make such a frame?

I should have learned all that in the fatherland, if I had known\textsuperscript{137} what would happen with me. May I ask the Juncker Brother to send the one letter to the Honorable Mother, the other to the Honorable Ambassador. I wrote to him because I hope that he will be more willing to provide more opportunities to ship letters and also indicate whom I can hand over the answer because the Bishop of Cartagena is awaiting his departure any time now, not here but in Cadiz, two days away. I do not think that the ambassador will not mind my politeness. Therefore I have included [my letter to him] in this letter because I do not quite know the proper title. Otherwise I would have included this into his letter, and it would have been forwarded faster and more surely.

So, would the Juncker Brother let me know his title, which will allow me to write to him directly, if there will not be any other opportunity, and then I could include our letters [to his family] into his. I hope that everyone is in good health, especially the beloved Honorable [Sister-in-Law] and her dear son, my nephew. Here we suffer from great heat and drought, hence bread is very expensive. What has happened with the gymnasium [school building]? What is the situation now after the pope’s death? What else is new? [Neg. 51836] Before the Juncker Brother will write to me again, we might have marched out of Europe, though they give us once black, then white news, so nothing certain can be said. Can the Honorable Sister or the Sister-in-law prepare as good meals as they are served here?\textsuperscript{138}

Every day, every dear day, the same food, cooked the same way. But on Sundays they serve us something special: they give us first a milk soup with a piece of fried pork, then [or: alternatively] a soup without bread but spicy; third \textit{ollo} [chicken (pollo)?] or lamb and beans, enriched with small pieces of bacon. On that there are olives or \textit{cibebe}n for desert [raisins ?]. That’s the treat for Sunday: no veal or beef. I have never seen any of that since I have been in Spain. Nor any roast. Nevertheless, we are well, at least I. Does the Honorable Sister-in-Law also sport such a long tail at her dress as the women in Sevilla?
Recently, when I want for a walk and saw some women with such a tail in front of me, a heavily loaded ass passed by that had to walk by them and could not find any other space. In that moment the entire ass stepped with all four legs on such a tail, which made me and others laugh. Again new Fathers Procuratores have arrived from Lima who will believably request new missionaries. I expect them here any day in our hostel since they have business to do in Cadiz.

My regards and commendations to the Lady and to all the other siblings. I commend myself in brotherly love.

Sevilla, May 1, 1730
The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s most submissive
Philipp Segesser. S.J.

P.S.: I have been invited by a German tailor from usnacht [?] and a pilgrim’s daughter [?] to a wedding. What honors there are here in Sevilla!
Highly Born Honorable Mother, etc.
Sevilla, May 1, 1730.

The letter that the Honorable Mother probably wrote around February 12 of this year I have received on April 9 that is, considerably later than otherwise. Normally I receive the letters within a month. To this present letter was appended also a letter by the Father Burckhardt, Preacher at the Cathedral of Constance. But that letter had been taken out of the envelope without the seal having been broken. But the inner pieces had been ripped out, and they were delivered to me this way. What might have happened only the dear God knows. I would like to know, first, to whom the letters had been handed out in which nothing had been written that could have been of disadvantage to anyone. The reason why I have postponed the answer until today is that I am expecting another letter from the Juncker Brother, and I wanted to respond to both at that opportunity. I hope especially to find out thereby through whom I can expect to receive letters, and similarly, to whom I can send back the answers.

I also hoped to learn something about the late Lord Anses through [the Honorable Brother’s letter], as the Honorable Mother has promised me and as I could conclude from her last letter. Yet, I have not received any letter so far; hence I am awaiting with great longing an answer, while I am writing in my room, not bothered by any visits, my response to the above mentioned letter by the Honorable Mother, and this today that is, on that day at which I hope you at home are thinking of me. Similarly I hope that the Honorable Mother and all the dear relatives have passed the previous Lent season well and rewardingly and now, after Easter, are completely healthy and happy. I hope also that the cumbersome catarrh has let go. This has been a general illness also here, but I was only touched by it lightly.

I suffered from it not more than two days, and I overcame it simply by abstaining from wine and food, and by chasing away the heat that was highly burdensome there, with water. Others have only increased this catarrh by eating meat at the time of Lent and by taking medicine. In the meantime a missionary, an Italian from Rome, with the name Antinelli, ca. nineteen years of age, who was the first to graduate from the novitiate, died from such a strong catarrh in our hospital. He was supposed to travel with me to Mexico, if not the Heavens had not wanted to call him up first. A medical doctor had forewarned us of this catarrh sickness, so no one of all the people, neither the Christians nor the Levites [here: the Jews], and not even some of the altar boys can be seen, except for three who hold the cloths above the others when the priest begins to sing the “Gloria in excelsis.”

Then the cloths are suddenly removed, and a beautiful decoration with many lights can be
seen. From the ceiling they lower diverse images on paper, and a whole battalion of birds and swallows. At their wings are attached many different small bands of paper and cut out strings, and their flying around in the church creates more laughter than devotion, especially among the boys who try to catch them.

At Easter I waited for the Easter eggs, but here in Spain they do not know anything about them. Therefore I sat down and [made some], which the Spaniards could not stop admiring. They did not even want to believe that they were real chicken eggs, until they were broken and the content was revealed. The Father Professor Thysier wanted to see how they are made, so I showed it him, but he did not brought any to the frying pan [idiomatic: did not produce any].

The missionaries who work in Paraguay have left, with whom I also had supposed to travel with from Neuburg. They are so lucky, after they have de parted from Cadiz, to have arrived in that very country one year later. They have suffered the least from the danger on the ship although they ran out of food and drink. This is documented in the letter by one of those missionaries that I read recently. A few days ago I observed the blooming of the palm trees, how they push the flowers out, like the brooms with which one sweeps the rooms. They are full of buttons, very white and as smooth as the most polished ivory. When I asked why not all were blooming, instead only some, I got as an answer: some are male, the others female, and that no female blooms if not a male is near by. I thought much about that since it is hard to believe, but all Spaniards confirm this in unison.

Recently, not far from Granada, a Dominican monk forced his way into the royal castle where the king is staying right now. The first guards let him in, thinking that he had some [important] business to do as a cleric. But the second guard questioned and held him, and when he tried to enter violently, one of the soldiers grabbed his habit, or coat, and discovered thereby the hidden guns which he carried with him that is, six pistols. They do not yet know what the goal or purpose might have been. When the news were brought to the king, the queen demanded that he be hanged immediately, but the king ordered to question him more carefully and to keep him a prisoner. So we are awaiting the outcome.

No one wants to say anything definite about the war, and people believe that nothing will come of it at the end, which we can only hope. The galleons destined for Cartagena are supposed to leave on May 6; they had been supposed to depart already on April 6. Everything goes slower [here].

With my regards to you, and also to everyone else.
My Highly Born Noble Honorable Mother’s most loyal son Philipp Segesser, etc.
Letter 34

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Sevilla, May 8, 1730 (Neg. 51837-51838)

Neg. ASM 51837
PA 437/586
No. 14

Highly Honorable Brother,

The letter that was sent on April 4 I have received through the mail partly with great comfort, and partly with sorrow. On its envelope there were different instructions from different hands. When the Juncker Brother could write another time via this opportunity, it would probably be good without creating further trouble if the Juncker Brother would write on the envelope: via Paris, Madrid = to Sevilla because this is a rather secure opportunity. I feel comforted through the writings of the Juncker Brother because I was able to learn from the same letter about the well-being of all the dear relatives. The loving God preserves everyone for many further years to His Godly honor and all-encompassing comfort.

Give my regards to the most beloved Honorable Mother. The letter also caused me worries because it included news of the uprising of the Prince of Beuentreueth’s [?] subjects, which could do great harm to my beloved Fatherland, like the uprising in Sankt Gallen did twice. In truth, who knows whether the subjects of the mentioned prince do not receive support from the Reformed [Protestants] who search for new opportunities to increase their power.

The Swiss Federation [?] needs help, may God grant that it will be found. Regarding the small chest [that I sent], it cannot have been in Genoa by March 4th because it was detained a very long time in Cadiz until finally an opportunity arose, and it left from Genoa on the ship with the name “Our Lady of Grace” [in Spanish] under the Captain Joseph Maria whose name (his family name was not told to me by him to whom the chest had been entrusted, perhaps he had forgotten it). It was then sent off to Genoa. Yet I hope it will have arrived in the meantime, or has already arrived at home, as I also wrote a few days ago. So an answer was in the letter, which I received, half opened, I do not know why, from the Honorable Mother and Father Burckhardt, and therefore this answer, like this letter, is sent back through the post with two enclosures, one addressed to the Spanish Lord Resident, the other to the Honorable Sister Maria [Neg. 51838] Anna, together with a sheet that was destined for the Juncker Brother. I have also sent a letter on the 7th of March by way of the Bishops from Cartagena, whose service I can no longer use because I am never certain, when he will travel with the galleons to Cartagena again.

It may be, but should not worry the Juncker Brother that when the galley departs, I will also be leaving Europe. I have often wished that, but our ships that should have departed for Mexico are still in the concave land [other side of the Atlantic]. One does not think about it yet [regarding us], for those alone who will travel to Peru will board these galleons, as I remember having written in the last letter.
I hope that this letter together with the little cases have arrived. Concerning the content of the cases you can find the list in that letter as well. But I add it here as well, as far as I can remember: First, there are two silk bands on which there is the Baby Jesus from the Philippine Islands.

Second, there are the Saint Ignatius beads along with instructions in Spanish and Latin, so you can figure out how to use them. Third, you will find six *wendalien* [votive images] from China for the lady who motivated me to send the case in the first place, because I could not remember having seen such things in Lucerne or anywhere else. Fourth, there is a ring made from gold and tumbaga,\(^{140}\) and then two others that you can use according to instruction. Fifth, there is a rubber against poison from Mexico. Sixth, a small piece of bezoar. Seventh, a model castle [?] from China. Eighth, a *real* and half with which to weigh all the things.

Nine, different letters, etc. Everything is well sealed and specifically designated, as you have probably already seen. If, however, these things have not yet arrived, you could inquire in Genoa if a ship under the mentioned protection and names might have arrived. You can then demand those things from the captain. Even though they do not seem to make a big impression, here they are of great value as I have already written, etc.

Although Father Georgius Schmid seems to favor our house [family], and although I have experienced a lot of courteousness from him in Neuburg on the Donau, and although I wish that the Lords of Lucerne would be able to hire such a dear well known Jesuit as the President of the College, I have considerable doubt whether it will happen. Of course, it is not impossible. Should it happen, I as you to send my recommendations to him. At this time there is nothing else that comes to mind to write about; instead I commend myself to the brotherly favor.

Sevilla, May 8, 1730
Highly Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother,
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: If it might be possible for the Juncker Brother and Honorable Mother, could the letter, which I sent to the Honorable Mother 8 days ago be sent on to Father Burgckhardt in Constance. But he should also sent it back.
To my nephew a friendly greeting.
Letter to his mother Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Sevilla, May 22nd, 1730 (Neg. 51831-51832)

Neg. ASM 51831
PA 437/586
No. 11

Highly Honorable Mother,

I do not know what I might have written that the Honorable Mother together with the rest of the family might have had reason to speculate that I will be hardly able to receive another letter due to the imminent travel. I would like to wish that it would finally happen and we would embark on our journey, as I believe I have written already. They made us hope that after the galleons would have sailed off to Cartagena, they would also think of us because two Assogue ships (in which they transport the mercury that separates silver and gold to America) should sail to Veracruz afterwards. But since the galleons, which are already completely loaded, have not yet received the King’s order to set sail, though this can happen any hour now, it seems best to accept our destiny. Things work here, as they say in Spain, poco á poco [Spanish: little by little], so it will take a long time.

This cuts out our hope to leave Europe before August (and) afterwards it is not advisable at all [because of the weather]. The real sad thing is that not bad companions are awaiting the departure of the fleet. Only thirteen of our group have arrived in the port of Cadiz. We hope, however as already mentioned, to feel the heat on the sea already before the month of August, although the ships are heavily armored for the war. We now receive completely different news because I heard through a letter from a Capuchin army priest at the Basel regiment that everything Barcelona is in the highest state of disorder in the preparation of the war weapons. Also from Cadiz, the war ships are always sailing to Barcelona and Italy. May God give this Christian ruler a better understanding, and turn the weapons against the enemies! Here we do not know of any reason [for the war preparations], instead it is like always a good opportunity for patience.

More worries arose for me from the first mentioned letter, because it indicated that not only the subjects of the Prince of Beüntrüt were in uproar against the Prince of Sankt Gallen, but also those from erschach [?], Biel, and others [Neg. 51832] because the latter is said to have demanded from them to pay for the cost of the last war. They are also said to have asked those from Zürich, as the letter mentioned, for help, which to me seems rather unbelievable because the Honorable Mother did not make a single mention of such local troubles in the letter which I received yesterday with no little surprise regarding the extensive efforts, different instructions etc. It was dated April 16, and contained also a letter from the Father Sexiprediger. I am sure that she would have mentioned something.¹⁴¹

Extend to the Honorable Mother a thousand times thanks for her motherly diligence, particularly for having sent the relics which will serve me exceedingly well in the mission, if I should ever get there. I am expecting though to get a full account about the essential circumstances
from the Juncker Brother regarding the condition, social status, and type of life he led, namely the holy man, and where he was buried, from which prince the Honorable Mother received this treasure, for what reason he was martyred, etc. I cannot get all that information here in Spain without a widow report,¹⁴² because in Spain a *Helvética Sancta* cannot be found as a German book.¹⁴³

I just hope that this holy work will allow the Honorable Mother to receive God’s graces because He (God) recognizes that through the Honorable Mother, His honor is spread in far away lands by her son, whom he will, like the entire family, allow to be commanded to him. I have in the meantime sent two letters through the post. One to the Honorable Mother and the other to the Juncker Brother. In the first one there was enclosed a letter to the Honorable Resident Don Cornejo and one to the Honorable Sister Maria Anna. I am not sure whether I wrote on the envelope “zur Liegen” or “Kellerin,” etc. You will, however, understand. I also wish her a good times and good hopes; St. Anna and St. Xavier will assist her to the best of their abilities. The Juncker Brother will have also received in the other letter an enclosure to the Father Burckhardt.

As to the present letter, I have been beseeched by two other Fathers to enclose their letters. As you can see, I could not have refused without insulting them, although I had certainly thought that the letters would cost a lot. We have to help one another though because we live with one another. I hope that the Honorable Mother will not complain about that. It will hopefully have an end soon, so I will no longer have this opportunity [because of the transfer to America]. I enclose also a short answer to the Father Sexiprediger, thanking him for offering me to keep me in his spiritual memory, etc. I received the letter from the Honorable Mother at the right time. Then, yesterday our cook died, he is the third from of our house who left this earthly life. Next to my room stays another Father, for whose life I have not prayed much [yet].

I commend myself to everyone, and particularly to the Mother’s good favor and her concerned prayer.

Sevilla, May 22, 1730
This is third letter this month
to the Highly Honorable Mother,
your honorable son
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: Greetings to Lady Baumwart, whose prayers I greatly appreciate, and my greetings to Francisca.
Would you please send the enclosed letters to the College?
Puerto de Santa María

El Puerto de Santa María is a little town located at the Atlantic coast on the banks of the Guadalete River in the province of Cádiz, Spain, with roots even in ancient history. Columbus set sail from here for his second voyage to the New World in 1500. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this was the winter port for the royal galleys.

Letter 36

Letter to the mother Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Puerto de Santa María, Sept. 4, 1730 (Neg. 51839-51842)

Neg. 51839

Highly Born Noble Lady Mother,

The most beloved letter that you wrote to me on June 26 as a reply to two letters that I had sent before, I received, though fairly much delayed, in good shape early on August 25, giving me special consolation. I have no idea through what opportunity and to whom it might have been entrusted as a delivery to me since it did not reach me through the ordinary mail system. It was handed over to me unexpectedly one day, coming from Sevilla, where I do no longer reside—you can figure this out from the letter that I had recently sent to the Juncker brother from here, that is from the harbor Puerto de Santa María, located two hours away from Cadiz across the sea. I believe that your letter must have been enclosed in another one because it was handed over to me without the usual stamps from the post office and in a very clean form. I am even more obligated to give thanks to the lady mother because the motherly letter has satisfied my burning wish and desire. I am very pleased to hear that everyone is doing well, although no one can fully rest assured about that since health is never constant, just like sickness is never overly long lasting. Our worldly well-being helps little in achieving the eternal, much more blessed afterlife if the former is not translated into a more perfect life through the help of God. I do not doubt, however, that just that will happen on the part of the lady mother and of all the others in every detail. Nevertheless, I am grieved to hear that the lady mother is suffering from a loss of hearing. This might have resulted from her too numerous visits of damp churches, meaning that hurtful fluids and humidity attacked her. May the lady mother take care in this regard to avoid her suffering getting worse.

I was delighted to learn that the Rector father Provincialis bestowed the honor upon her to pay a personal visit to her and to give her through a conversation lasting two hours the kind of consolation which I would not have been able to provide. I assume from this that he does not
contempt my family at least, although he does not have me much in his mind since the time of my absence. After all, I have written to him and to other Father Rectors and sent those letters [Neg. 51840] via different routes, and yet I have received not even one answer, although he had promised me to write back. It would be my greatest desire to get an idea and to find out whether my letters have reached him or not. He will understand all my concerns, and those expressed in the letter that I had included into the little package that I had sent to him via Genoa from where it was supposed to have been delivered correctly through the hands of Lord Captain Joseph Maria Maldonati, if that is the correct name. This is what I have been informed the day before yesterday in Cadiz where I had made inquiries regarding the letters. So I hope that this package was also transported on to home where you must have forwarded without delay all those enclosed letters to the correct addresses, especially the one to the Father Provincial. My wish had been that he would receive the letter before his departure for Rome. I would have written more in that letter if I had known in advance the circumstances [of how the package would be handled].

I hope that the talks about Just Ranuty was nothing but a joke, and so I hope that his request has been fulfilled just as he had asked for. Although we [meaning the Segesser family] are small, we have already stood at the side of so many a great personality and worked hard to strengthen his reputation. One should not be surprised to learn that where God’s grace is in effect, all losses will be replaced, as I have learned often so far. I only wished I had not blocked the passage for this divine force through my fearful, sleepy, and dilatory lifestyle.

I would not spend any more thoughts on [Just Ranuty] if he were to remain a too small person, which I would not hope since the change of the air and maybe a different lifestyle might help him to grow. I wish for him especially that kind of constancy and perfection which I had been supposed to achieve through so many years [of efforts] with the help of so many opportunities, and yet never accomplished. If, however, he might not have been accepted [in the order of the Jesuits] this year, contrary to my expectations, he should not lose his courage for that reason, and he should not change his goal in life insofar as I do not doubt that he is already called upon to join the Society of Jesus. At the end that one wish will be fulfilled which God had originally in mind for us. This will happen earlier or later, it does not matter when, as long as it just happens etc.

Recently the great heat has subsided a little, although it is still so hot here as it is in my fatherland during the heat of the summer. For that reason one cannot really take walks before five or six o’clock in the afternoon. I use that time [before or after?] well together with Father Stiger who originates from our province and had last been in the College in Brig in Wallis. He has not been a member of the Society of Jesus for a long time, but he had been an affato-lord [associated priest?] not far from Platen where the lady Maria Catharina had been as an estate administrator [before the marriage?]. We often walk along the beach of the ocean and are amazed about the variety of sea shells and snail shells that have very mixed colors. People create pictures [collages?] or sculptures with them, just like those in Germany made out of seeds and bugs. From there we often walk across the sand which the see throws up the shore and which then the wind picks up and piles up so high that the hills [dunes] have the same height as the Museck. Nevertheless, on one side all kinds of plants are growing out of the sand whose blossoms are delightful. But they are often covered by sand again, just like in Germany, during winter, the wind piles snow higher on one side than on the other.

A learned Spaniard should hear us speak to each other in Spanish; I think we would often give him an opportunity to laugh. You see, this is our way of spending time since there is nothing good we could do [otherwise]. Whenever one wants to give good advice, they immediately say: That is not the custom here. But they have the custom to treat Sundays and holidays like workdays. This
causes so much confusion that they do not work on our new building on the same days, otherwise an egregious abuse would be confirmed. To go to confession and communication [?] is not treated here as narrowly as we are used to in Luccerne. And this although some young Spanish Fathers have pretty much followed [chased away?] a certain Father who had been sitting in the staircase on the side of the cemetery, and they caused a devout praying sister to sweat even more [meaning not quite clear]. In general, the women here are pretty open minded.

On June 24 the Assogues, with which we had been supposed to travel and as we had been assured until very recently, began with their journey to America, and left behind with us nothing but sad sighs and the longing to travel with them. In the meantime, on August 18, the flotilla safely arrived from Veracruz in the harbor of Cadiz with which we had been supposed to travel with more than a year ago and which left right before our eyes, as you already know, on its way to Mexico, without us having had any chance on embarking. Hence, we had to witness the departure and return of those ships with a very sad face. But only half of the ships, that is eleven, came back here, whereas twenty-two had left originally. The reasons for that are, as they say, because always some ships stay behind, or because some ships are in bad shape, or because some have to travel somewhere else.

With these ships two fathers Procuratores arrived from Santa Fe here in Cadiz. But I have not yet seen them. They will not [immediately] travel to the Congregation [Church meeting] in Rome, only later because one of them is not well; and among Spaniards everything must work slowly, although both are native [American] Indians and have never seen Europe.

The above mentioned flotilla did not transport many things with it, as you can see from the attached list which I have copied in part, and translated in part into German for your better understanding, and this also for the lord Ambassador, in case that he might not have received it from another source. Later it should be sent to the father Rector together with this letter, if you think it proper, to Rome.

By the way, let me tell you that, although it seems that the goods that are contained in the list would not fill more than one or two ships, all ships must be fully loaded for their voyage across the ocean. Only those items, for which a royal tax has to be paid, are included in the register, apart from the money that is handed over to the king. If there is room left [on the ships] it is being filled with royal goods and tobacco. The tax amounts to 25 doubloon per 100, except when the good is EG [Euer Gnaden? = being shipped free of tax?]. If we talk in terms of doubloons, the king always takes 25 percent. So you can imagine how much [or rather little] a merchant might be inclined to pay such a huge tax, after having taken such a risk [during the voyage] upon himself. Nevertheless, recently a merchant told me that he expects to make a profit from his ship, which arrives here with the flotilla, after all expenditures and costs have been paid, in the amount of at least 60,000 thaler [ducats], as I would estimate.

The fathers Procuratores who along with us await an opportunity to depart for the Philippines (if God will preserve their lives until then), had brought with them for the planned missions twelve thousand thaler. Of those they had to pay as tax to the royal chamber three thousand and two hundred thaler. These are [truly] burdensome travels! But I will report about this and other things more in a later letter. Here we expect the king to arrive soon who has spent some time in Sevilla on his journey.

In the harbor of Santa María, September 4, on a day on which the comedy must have been performed [back home]. 1730 etc.
My highly born noble lady mother’s  
most loyal son  
Philippus Segesser S.J.

[Neg. 51941]

Value of the cargo transported by the flotilla that arrived from Veracruz, that is, the cargo by the Marquès de Mari su General, and which arrived at the Bahia of Cadiz on August 18, 1730.

1. [copied text from the list in Spanish, the German translation by Segesser follows below]
2.
3.
4.
e tc.
32.

[Neg. 51842]

The following items have been transported by the flotilla of ships, having arrived from Mexico in the port of Cadiz on August 18, 1730:

For the royal majesty, in money ..................... 968 thousand + 898. Beß,\textsuperscript{144} or thaler 
for the merchants ............................................... 10481.... 872 thaler 
all kinds of silver wares, wrought .......................................................... 121...804 
other not wrought silver ........................................... 84...671 
wrought gold .......................................................... 135...574 
not wrought gold ................................................... 19...152 
altogether a sum of eleven million, seven hundred and 85 thousand, nine hundred [erroneous repeat] and 71 beß or thaler, insofar as one beß amounts to one thaler. 
....................................................... I n  s u m  - 11785...971 thaler.

As to products:
—2514 leather bags with good purple beans [in the Spanish copy: 7514), weighing 20927 arrobas.\textsuperscript{145} One arroba weighs 25 pounds. One bag costs thousand thaler.
—229 such bags filled with wild or not wild purple beans.
—2949 such bags with blue dye or starch for the white linen etc.
—170 arrobas with a kind of spice that colors the food red, but it is not saffron
—494 five times arrobas of wood or tree trunks with which one can dye cloth in red
—1511 thousand [?] and 130 long sticks or stritzli [local Swiss term] that are mixed into the chocolate
—14 chests, each containing 8 arrobas with already prepared chocolate
—192 arrobas of cacao, which is the fruit from which chocolate is made
—7713 arrobas of sugar
—10 chests with red powder for the stomach, of which I have made use myself already. It is pleasant
to use
— 13014 treated skins of oxen for shoes etc.
— 147 mid-sized terracotta jugs filled with balsam
— 23 arrobas of an oil that smells like balsam and flows out of a tree called María
— 641 arrobas de copal, which is a kind of medicine which will be known by the apothecaries
— 74 arrobas de diquidambar, which is a fragrant matter
— 2090 arrobas de jalapa, again a medicine
— 49 arrobas de zarza parilla, which is an herb used for medicinal purposes
— 96 arrobas de contragerva, which is a bitter root and is also used as medicine
— 12 arrobas of a certain kind of pitch; but it is not terpentine (women eat it)
— 224 chests with Indian dishes out of terracotta, which smell very well, if you use small parts of it [?]
— 27 chests of porcelain
— 29 arrobas of ivory
— 260 shells of turtles
— 410 arrobas of ptarmic [snuff powder]
— 58 dozens of good-tasting dishes [?], small pieces broken off it are very tasty for women, when they eat them etc.

P.S.: They say that the flotilla did not return as poor as it was upon its departure. That is easy to believe.

Letter 37

Letter to his mother, Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Puerto de Santa María, September 4, 1730 (Neg. 51843-51844)

Neg. ASM 51843
PA 437/586
No. 16

Highly Born Noble Honorable Mother,

The memory of my name day reminds me also of my most beloved Honorable Mother’s name day, which has not yet arrived, but since this letter might take so much time on the road, it will not arrive early either. So, herewith I would like to send in filial dutifulness my best wishes, especially for good health and a happy life not only this time, but also in the future. This is my own wish, and that of the Honorable Mother and all the other beloved siblings. I join my wishes with theirs. We wish that it will be fulfilled by the dear God with His blessing and grace. To this I add the usual Holy Mass offerings and other good deeds that I will perform with the Honorable Mother in mind, not to forget the Mass ordinaries. I beg that you be content with these small dedications.
If the letter that I wrote to the Honorable Cornejo is not quite correct in format, do not be surprised because to acquire all nuances of a completely foreign language demands much more experience. The Honorable Ambassador will have to be patient until I can present him a more proper and better one in which I then can express more fully my obligation and dedication. I must thank the great God that I have made so much progress in that language since I count myself among the least of the others [who learn that language?].

I would like to know what this Fall season has brought in terms of changes in the [Jesuit] province. Perhaps the Father Preacher might be so nice and write to me a little about the most important aspects, such as, who is now the court preacher? Would you please send to Father Burckhardt in Constance both this and the previous letter that I had recently sent to the Juncker Brother, along with the list of the names of the ships. But ask him to return the letters because it would not be good if my letter get into foreign hands. With the fleet a Jesuit and missionary, who had been on the Philippine Islands, also arrived. But since he had a hit in a great fury [someone] with the foot in the head, from which the other person died, he was demoted because of this scandal.

Then [Neg. 51844] he had spent ten years in his fatherland in Mexico on his own estates and had searched by his own means the salvation of humanity. He has now decided, as he said while he was in our house that he can’t be truly blessed outside of the Society, and that he will travel to Rome to try to be accepted again by the Society. Certainly a long journey, which will cost him 4000 thaler. But isn’t heaven worth it?

He seems otherwise to be a learned and a courageous man. The Juncker Brother can write about this occurrence on a sheet of paper and send it with the other material to the College. Otherwise, it’s not fun to live around here because of this boring waiting it is hard to find peace of mind, and there is nothing but angry faces. The sick father of whom I’ve written has been sent to his province again, and at the next opportunity another person will be sent home to the Vienna province, who will be accompanied by another person for some specific reasons, although nothing will be told to him about his return trip until he must go, unless a calamity will occur in Genoa. Others await the answer from Rome. As to what concerns me, if nothing else will happen, I am committed rather to lose my life here in Spain according to the will of God than to return home, even if I had to wait my whole life here. But I hope that this will not happen. God will think of us in the right time. We have to patiently all the time. Herewith I recommend myself to the motherly grace and especially hope to be included in her holy prayers.

In Puerto de Santa Maria, September 4, 1730.
My Highly Born Honorable Mother’s
most loyal son
Philipp Segesser, S.J.

Would you please send the attached letter [by another person] to the College. This father has done me other services, so I cannot refuse his request, etc.
Letter 38

Letter to his mother Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Puerto de Santa Maria, November 9, 1730 (Neg. 51845)

Neg. ASM 51845
PA 437/586
No. 17

Highly Born Mother. In Puerto de Santa Maria, November 9, 1730,

I hope that you received my last letter without a problem, as I have sent two other letters from the fourth of September to my sisters together with an attached letter to another priest. Now the time has come for me to say good-bye to this part of the world since, through the strong prayers of good friends, a really unexpected opportunity has arisen to continue our journey, as can be learned from my brother’s letter. This letter will be the last letter I send from Europe, after which you should not expect another one soon. As soon as I arrive at a place where I will have chance to send another letter, I will not forget my filial obligation.

In the meantime I want to thank the Honorable Mother for all the motherly care, great help and dear worry that you have given me from my childhood years until now. For that I am thankful and in your debt, so much so that words cannot describe it. May God give me good health, much work and great reward, which will all be committed to my mother. And if I should not survive this dangerous sea voyage, I hope that I may be diligent for my mother in Heaven. In the meantime I command myself to the diligently prayer into which my mother will include me, like all the other [siblings], as she has done so far, so that I, if it is the divine will, can do many good things and will be able to handle great burden to the honor of God according to the requirements of such a calling. May others, as well as my mother and all dear relatives forgive my mistakes that I have made now and again, and from that bad example, learn not to do what I have done.

Instead, always have in your mind God, Christian virtues, and a true piety. Do not sink to deeply into worldly materialism, through which you can lose the eternal virtue. We only have a short time to enjoy this life, after which comes eternal life. May God grant us that eternal blissful life in which I hope to meet all of you so that we can have delight in God together with one another, because such things will not happen again in this world.

My Highly Born Noble Honorable Mother’s
honorable son
Philipp Segesser S.J.

[Neg. 51846]
P.S.
As to the Masses, they have all been read until now. But there will be hardly any other for the next three months, because you can only read one or none at all on the ship and the priests must take turns. And maybe I will not be able to read any due to the general resistance. I would have written 8 days ago, but I have been in the spiritual exercitia [exercises], when my brother’s letter arrived.

Letter 39

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Puerto de Santa María, 10. November 1730 (Neg. 51847-51848)

Neg. ASM 51847
PA 437/586
No. 18

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

I have received the letter addressed to me dated September 19, though it reached me a little late, through the Father Aleman, a former Procurator of the Indians, who is supposed to be a friend of the Honorable Ambassador from Cadiz, on the 31 October.

I am really irritated that I did not know the situation of this Father since I have talked to him several times in Sevilla, but he never asked me where I am from, since it is believed that all German [missionaries] are from the imperial countries [Germany Empire]. Otherwise I would have liked to recommend him my own countries [Switzerland]. Apart from that, the biography of the Holy Nicolai of Russia is included, as the Juncker Brother learned from another letter that has hopefully arrived in the meantime. I hope that the little chest will have reached its goal so that the letters included therein will have gotten to their proper addresses. The Honorable Resident has graciously paid attention to my small person, but at such a court, from which everything depends, such a recommendation might help rather little, unless you knock at the door of greater lords, such as Patigno and de la Paz.

The Archbishop, however, has in the meantime announced that were we to sail with the Assogues, he wants to take with him some missionaries in his ship. Whether I will have such luck is to be seen because I am very bad on the water and need more attention than could afford in these circumstances.

His royal majesty has stayed here only for a short time due to the rough sea climate, atmosphere was and was caught in the one of the biggest thunderstorm on the return journey to Sevilla because then there was such a thunderstorm which lasted for 5 days during which thunder and lightning occurred day and night. [This thunderstorm] has also pushed a merchant ship, with two sails [masts], and has nicely smashed it against the rocks by Santa Catarina and made it useless. The barges that came to help have failed the same way. Many ships that were in the port were exposed
to the same danger, I have seen it with my own eyes after the bad weather. God protect us from such storms! I have learned myself what happened to Jost Ranutis since I was told about it. The Father Provincial is Magnus Aman: therefore he likes big size [untranslatable pun on the Latin], but if the Just Ranutius might not have grown, it would be better for him to wait one more year since the life in the novitiate does not help much for growing tall. Some, however, gain a bit of length in Landsberg, and one has to be careful and humble in what one says and does to avoid the impression as if one wanted to force the matter. Particularly then nothing will happen. I have written to him myself and included an instruction, of how he should behave. [Neg. 51848] The Juncker Brother should request that he comes to see him and then give him this letter as well as the one that I wrote to Father Rector. In case he might carry such [the letter] away, this will not cause harm, especially when he gives his letter to the Father Rector, and also to his Father Professor whom the Juncker Brother should visit on my behalf when the opportunity arises.

We do what we can, the rest, we leave in God’s hands.

I congratulate the Juncker Brother and Honorable Sister[in-law] for two reasons. First, because the childbirth went so well, and second, because the Juncker Brother and the Honorable Sister[in-law] sent an angel to Heavens which the Lord will praise eternally. However, if the Juncker Brother as gratitude for the gift would have added to the name of Jean Baptist also Nicolaus, then Nicolaus indeed would have rewarded the trust in him. But is the young princess [the new-born] of the Honorable Sister called Maria Anna Philippa? I am very sorry that no Philipp turned up. However, Juncker Brother should congratulate her in my name to the first act [the first child], more will certainly follow; in a comedy different types of people appear on the stage.

Now I must thank my Juncker Brother for the brotherly affections that I have received, for so many letters, great care, and expenses spent on my behalf, and for paying for my letters in many ways possible. I will no longer be able to enjoy the brotherly grace any more in this part of the world. Everything is already and we will depart within a couple of days. This is a most unexpected turn of events. After the king had recently arrived here and discovered us missionaries like sitting in the Purgatory, he called the first Lord Minister Patignum to him and said that he would like to send two ships to Havana [Cuba] and on this the missionaries of the Society. He immediately issued an order and appointed Lord Dotel, a Frenchman, as the captain. The name of the [captain] of the other ship Saint Stephan I do not recall right now. The confessor priest of the king announced to us the long desired decision, and quickly all the preparations were done for the departure.

Father Roderus as the Procurator General of the Indies, who resides all the time here or in Sevilla, negotiated with the captain for each one of us three hundred and twenty thaler and paid down half amount, which is 10 thousand, the rest will paid him in Veracruz, whereto the captain has the obligation to take us, according to the royal degree. Just imagine how much only this sea voyage costs!

However, this does not include the money for our provisions that we will need in Havana, where we will get off the ship, and which also need to be paid for as part of our missionary activities. Havana is an island where the Mexican province already has a college. So, I will certainly get to my own province, as long as the ocean allows me to do so. And should I arrive there in very bad shape and weak, this would then mean that I will stay there for good. After all, the captain will remain there for 15 days only. In that time they will unload and load, as the business there will require. Once, however, I will have regained some strength to leave from there, I will not stay there, unless a special order by the Father Provincials might require something else. We board the next ship, called Blandon, which has 60 canons and two companies of soldiers.
God may give us fortune and blessings especially until the Canary Island because the stretch to there is pretty rough water, and dangerous because of thunderstorms and roaming ocean pirates from Turkey and Africa. Once we will have left these above mentioned islands, the Indian ocean will soon warm us up.\footnote{May herewith the Juncker Brother, along with his family, keep our company, and especially me, in his thoughts and prayers. I will recompense you for it if I will survive.}

Now, before I conclude this letter, I must bother the Juncker Brother with the request for one or the other good deed. The first is: would the Juncker Brother write everything noteworthy that might happen on a piece of paper, so that when he writes to me, which I hope will happen at least once or twice in a year, nothing will be forgotten, which would give me some comfort [to read]. The other will require more effort, but maybe the Juncker Brother will not be disinclined to do so, and to which the Honorable Mother would like to contribute as well. You might have noticed that I lost my hand lamp (this is a lamp that the Jesuits tend to have), and not to have one could be difficult. Therefore I ask the Juncker Brother with the next opportunity to send me one or another, in case that one might not work. I remember having seen those in Lucerne on the market offered by a merchant under the arch of the school building.

Or, should the same not to be found in Lucerne, could the Juncker Brother ask the Father Joseph in Munich for such a thing, so that it could be shipped to a merchant in Genoa. But not to the local College, because there almost everything remains forgotten, as I myself have seen many things destined for the missionaries. Instead ship it directly via another merchant to Cadiz to the Father Roderum Procurator General of the Indies. Please make sure that they will be well packed so that they do not hit each other. From Genoa there are enough opportunities to ship to Cadiz, and from Cadiz to Veracruz, and from there to Mexico at least two times a year. A lamp costs ca. one gulden, or at most a thaler. I hope that the Juncker Brother will follow through with this request. But if he thinks to entrust the package to the Father Roderus, do not do so because the content could get stuck there because in Spain such lamps are very valuable, rare, and loved. For that reason the one that I had originally suffered shipwreck.\footnote{I hear that there is no tree oil in Mexico, but they do not know that other types of oil which they burn there for light works also for such lamps. I hope the Juncker Brother will help me with this matter insofar as I have already received much bigger favors from him. Rest assured that I will try to recompense him for such good deed. The third that I am requesting is that the Juncker Brother not forget to send me the authentication for the relic of St. Nicolai of Rusa. Everything that he might send me, may he address it, if it cannot be shipped safely through the Honorable Ambassador, to Father Roderus in Cadiz, because the latter likes me a lot. As to the considerable costs, the Juncker Brother should not be troubled because Father Roderus will pay for it.}

May the Juncker Brother live well with his beloved wife and take good care of his dear boy, and may the nephew be especially well instructed in all piety and proper sciences. If anything seems worthwhile what I am writing, you must first read through it and correct it because it is not the best. Particularly, may the Juncker Brother not allow any of those get in foreign hands.
If God permits it, send me another fellow because *vis coniuncta fortior ad maiorem Dei Gloriam. Valeat et millies bene, mei’qs semper memor* [Latin: combined force might serves better to strengthen the greater glory of God. May He be praised and blessed a thousand times, and keep me in His memory forever]. I will write to the Juncker Brother at the next opportunity once we will have arrived at the harbor. I command myself to everyone, wherever they might be, and so also to Francisca, and especially to Lady Baumwart.

In Porta de Santa Maria, November 10, 1730.
The High noble Honorable Brother’s
most humble brother,
Philippus [sic] Segesser.

*Valete omnes* [Latin: May you all be well!]
Havana

Founded by the Conquistador Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar in 1515, Havana is the capital city of Cuba and was a major harbor for the entire trans-Atlantic traffic. King Philip II of Spain granted Havana the title of city in 1592, and a royal decree in 1634 recognized its importance by officially designating it as the “Key to the New World and Rampart of the West Indies.” To protect its ships from very common pirate attacks, the Spanish crown ordered that all the vessels had to travel in a flotilla, or fleet, for better protection, aiming for Havana first, or they had to assemble there before their departure for Spain. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Havana was the third largest city in the Americas, after Boston and New York. In 1762, Britain occupied Cuba, opening it up for a massive influx of new merchandise and slaves, but they gave it up again the following year in exchange for Florida. In 1748 the Havana cathedral was constructed as a Jesuit church, but after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, it was transformed into the Parroquial Mayor church in 1777.

Letter 40

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Havana, February 2, 1731 (Neg. 51850-51851)

Neg. ASM 51850
PA 437/586
No. 19

Highly Born Juncker Brother,

It is very comforting for me after a very long voyage to have reached the port for the first time. Hence I allow myself to inform my most beloved Honorable Mother, Juncker Brother, and the other siblings, and all highly regarded in-laws about it. After we left Puerta de Santa Maria for Cadiz on November 16th (also known as the winter month), and then departed from there for America, we have fortunately arrived on February 1 or “Hornung” [German for February], and this after 78 days, whereas we should have reached this port within 70 days. But good things take time, especially because our Honorable Captain Ignatius Dotel preferred to take the safe route and make a large detour to avoid getting us into danger. Moreover, he had gotten news and order from the royal majesty on the last day before his and our departure to take on hundred and twenty soldiers onto the ship whom he had to drop off at the island of Santo Domingo near Coa, a bay, from where they had to march seven miles through the wilderness (there was not to be found one house, instead only some hunters who had gotten there to provide us with some necessary food and some oxen, bringing them down from the mountain). We were not allowed, upon the king’s order, to land at the town of
Domingo. But because the commander of that town had to send one of his men to pick up the royal order and writing personally, we had to await the balandra there for a couple of days, with which a brother from the college of the mission there, which belongs to Cartagena, delivered to us in the name of the Father Rector some fruit, sweets, and fresh bread for our refreshment.

He told me that the Father Candidus Götzfried teaches grammar there upon his own desire. That father had been in Landsberg with me in the novitiate. Up to this point we had travelled well, it could not have been better, although, as I said above, we did not rush. From that location on, however, though we did not experience misfortune, we were constantly in worries because the direction was pretty unknown to our crew, and at night we often went as much backwards as we had moved forward during the day because of the high tide of the ocean, so called currents. Nevertheless, we were lucky enough to get here, especially me because due to my well-known suffering I have, as far as I can tell, hardly eaten more than altogether half a pound within 42 days, and this to everyone’s surprise.

I kept myself alive with simple broth, and stepped onto land as a fresh and healthy man. I also wished to continue immediately to Veracruz insofar as I would have to experience the unavoidable suffering again after having spent some time here. How long we will stay here, I do not know because our Honorable Captain must necessarily await the new order from Don de Torres as the supreme lord of this sea, since the first from the king had been changed. Other things that happened in the meantime I keep for another letter and inform you with this one that the alpogues with which we had been supposed to travel, as we thought, had experienced considerable misfortune because of the caimanes that we had diligently and carefully escaped. The third and still new ship had been completely lost through shipwreck, and no one else was saved than the Honorable Captain with another marinero.

The two other ships, one of which was under the command of a Lord de Torres, arrived in Veracruz without the mast and the sails. The Fathers Franciscans could not save more than their hats, and had to throw their arnedel into the sea in order to salvage the ship. God protected us from such misfortune on our further travel. Another ship that transported a good amount of money for the king crashed on a sandbank, called vibera, on September 4, not far from the island Jamaica; the crew mostly survived. An English ship that followed a day later picked up the royal treasures and the sailors who were fighting hunger and death and delivered them to the present port, where I met one of them, who had done his general confession with me in Sevilla before his journey. Now he had not enough money to buy the necessary clothing. This Englishman will return to Spain or England with his wife and will deliver, as I hope, the present letter at whatever port, insofar as I had a couple others have entrusted him with a few writings.

In the meantime I hope that the Honorable Mother, Juncker Brother, and all the others are well and all carefully keep my sea voyage and other travels in their hearts since there are many dangers, as you will learn from the extensive letter from Mexico, granted that I will reach it.

Herewith I command myself to everyone’s dedicated prayer and devotion, to the motherly and brotherly favors and graces, and remain, not to forget the humbly submitted regards to everyone,

Havana, February 2, 1731.

my most beloved Juncker Brother’s
most loyal brother,
Philippus [sic] Segesser, S.J.

P.S.: News reached us that among the five fathers missionaries, among them four Germans, two whom the Honorable Mother had entrusted in Lucerne the liquor and religious objects, have died on their journey to Puerto. Hence Father Carol Kiermayer is the only German who has held out on his post. Here supply of bread is tight, there is no wine, the living quarters are very tight for so many people. Otherwise one gets the best food according to our satisfactory expectations. Here are no Shrovetides, God alone knows what will happen with Lent, which I am wishing for everyone, myself feeling irritated about that and yet healthy.

Letter 41

Letter to his mother Anna Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi. Havana, April 3, 1731 (Neg. 51854-51855)

Neg. ASM 51854
PA 437/586
No. 20

Highly Nobly Born Honorable Mother,

I do not doubt that in the meantime the letter that I sent by way of an English ship from here about a month ago will have been delivered to the Juncker Brother as intended. With this next report I would like you to know that we will be departing from here since we have had to stay here longer than we had hoped, the cause being that the ships called Assogues, upon which our travel depends have just arrived on the Saturday before Palm-Sunday. To date the ship cannot be unloaded because of the holiday.

Together with those Assogues [note the different spelling] other ships have arrived with their load that must return with us to Veracruz. But I hope that we will be able in the next week to go aboard the ship with our old Honorable Captain Mr. Dotel and thus to complete the last track of our voyage. I wished that this letter would have already arrived at home so that the beloved relatives would often think of me in their eager prayers as they did for my last sea journey, because I attribute my favorable travels to their prayers. Hopefully this time the great love you show for me will not lack, which the gracious God will reward a thousand times over.

I wish that the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all the other relatives are also as healthy as I am and have put the holy feast behind them as I have, praise the Lord, although not as well as
it was possible in Spain, because I was unable to recover fully from the forty-two days during which I traveled at sea and suffered heavily from sea-sickness and became weak. Maybe the white wine from Saint Otmar might be available because throughout the entire time of Lent, except at the Holy Mass I have not tasted any, and I have had to make due with the rainwater. As to the ordinary food for lunch, there is plenty. And surprisingly the turtles often weigh more than 30 to 40 pounds and make a good meal, and they are not lacking. Then we had the Lenten season, which means that we had to eat specific Lent food: we had simmered peas, a little unsalted bread, rainwater, and this every day the same. We truly lived like missionaries.

There is no eggbread, there are only fleshy figs, and you also do not see grapes or zibeben [raisins]. I would have liked to find almonds covered with sugar, if you could find, since we have more sugar than bread, although even this is rather dark and unrefined. The juice from the sugar cane has often quenched my thirst. The air is rather healthy here but the heat is almost unbearable, and local people wonder why the Germans still go for walks in order to pass the time, while others sleep or entertain themselves otherwise. [Neg. 51855] About half of the Lent season has passed, but it does not seem as if it has been this long for me, because we appear to have arrived here at just the right time.

After we had established a mission here mostly in the German fashion that as, as in Germany, and not according to Spanish protocol, we Germans felt irritated that the Spaniards did not like it at all insofar they in their arrogant fashion thought that they knew it all better. This was even harder to swallow insofar as the Procurators as the Superiores are Spaniards as well. Nevertheless, the people here were amazed to see so many foreign missionaries in whom they immediately confided so that they did not want to confess their sins to no one else, happy to have met so willing confessors who lent them happily their ears as long as the time permitted. In this regard our detour or stop-over here was a special grace from God for the inhabitants, and this even more insofar as they really need such mission. In this city are representatives of various religious orders: there are more than one hundred Franciscans, about thirty Augustinians; around sixty-six Dominicans, around twenty Mercedarians,157 and a few of the Congregation of St. Phillip Neri.158 Next to two monasteries of the gracious brothers there were a few Bethlehemites who, though not priests, still had many worldly priests with them.159 The inhabitants complained that it was difficult to find a priest to do their confessions, and also about the church laws (to which the Jesuits are not allowed to object to). There are not more than four priests to be found in this city.

One of them is occupied as Father Rector and serves every Sunday during the Lent season and many other times as preacher on the pulpit in the most blessed churches and interpreter of the Christian teaching. He is also in charge of the construction of the new College building (I do not like what they are building, and it will not be anything like Ellwangen, although it will cost four to five times more, because it is Spanish, etc.).160 Another priest assumes the position of a manager, although he spends more time in the mountains than in the city. The third priest is a doctor of Philosophy, and the fourth covers all fields, and so covers the field of rhetoric as well. He also has to preach mainly on Fridays during the Lenten season.

So these four priests are very busy. How these functions are taken care of however, I will only tell you at a later moment in greater detail. In other words, most people have not confessed more than once a year, and many more not at all, and others repeat out of human weakness uselessly done confessions. Also many others must repeat their confessions because of their human weakness, which robs, however, the congregation of its good name and praise. All the while one can distinguish that among many good people there are some evil ones. I say “among the many” in this
city and in the area that belongs to the city because forty thousand blacks live here, as they are called locally, or Moors black as coal. Most of them were brought from Africa and are being sold here.

Of white people there are fourteen thousand. Almost all of these should confess to the Fathers Missionaries in this Lent and Easter time, that is, mostly to the German Fathers because most missionaries are Germans, whereas there are not more than five Spanish missionaries, along with four Italian priests. It would be very difficult with the blacks because they would have mostly to be examined in the articles of faith and to be taught, since they hardly know how many Gods there are. These good people keep me busy, as the others, from early in the morning until evening when it is time to go to bed, when it is forbidden upon the penalty of excommunication to hear confession. I must admit that it is easier in Germany to hear children’s confession than that of these poor ignoramuses. But who should not feel pity with them and teach them the word of God more often, and this even under much greater burdens and irritations than I have had to suffer from so far, which God, however, immediately replaces with consolation for the soul. Some of us have speculated that two of us were supposed to stay here.

But the superiors do not want to say it to anyone until he is supposed to step onto the ship. For some reason this allegedly concerns me, but I must say that I am not looking forward to such an arrangement. I need to remind you [as an explanation] that the local Rector as a Spaniard displays a disinclination toward the Germans. However, here would be enough opportunities to work for the salvation of souls and the glory of God. Hence God will determine it according to His will. If that were to happen to me, I would send a report in another letter with this same ship insofar as I can more easily do that with my hands before we board the ship. So, if no other letters reaches you together with this one, then the Honorable Mother can assume that I travelled to Mexico from where I will send another report, which, however, will arrive pretty late at home because no ship will arrive there and depart again so soon. There the sea is ordered to keep us safe.

One of the new ships, of which I wrote lately, and which will return to Spain, carries, as people say, three million ducats [money] for the king with it. Otherwise, our journey continues pretty difficult and slowly insofar as we could and should have completed this one already a year ago. I feel sorry for my things which have to lie for such a long time in water in a poorly made box into which easily moisture can enter, although I have made efforts to pack everything well. Certainly, everything what I need here on land for daily use loses color and turns gray, so you have to expose it to the sun. Not long ago I was in the ship to get something out of the chest, when I noticed that the bindings of the books and everything that was out of leather had been eaten by the worms and devoured by some beetles.

Everything else was white, almost covered like with a furry mildew. God knows how my things will look like when I will have arrived over there finally. How strange it might look like, as I am afraid of, there are many diverse issues because of the many pauses and stays almost at every location, which make this journey rather boring and irritating, of which a comprehensive report will be made. Otherwise I do not doubt that the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all the other relatives are healthy and keep me always in their thoughts, just as I observe my duty according to the specific opportunity of time and place, as my obligations require. I submit myself a thousand times with modesty [to all of you] and so also to the College to some fathers who know me as well as others.

I implore that the Honorable Mother and Reverend Father Rector will accept my recommendation. I would like to know what happened at the General Congregation in Rome, what new things were decided and who was elected as the head of the Society etc., then what else has
happened in the province and what novelties occurred because much will have changed until the
time when this Letter will reach its desired destination. The ship is not completely loaded by which
this letter will be delivered. I recommend myself with obliging thanks for all of the motherly love
and care.

I remain in filial humility also further on my highly born Honorable Mother’s most loyal son,
Philipp Segesser, S.J.
Havana, April 3, 1731.
Letter 42

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Havana, April 3, 1731 (Neg. 51862-51863)

Neg. ASM 51862
PA 437/586
No. 21

Highly Noble Honorable Brother, etc.

The Juncker Brother will easily understand the reason why I am giving him a letter for the Honorable Mother because he has many times done the same for me. Could the Juncker Brother, after having read this letter, because the same was meant for him, and therefore it was not sent as sealed (time, occasion, and paper are rare here), deliver it to the Honorable Mother with my filial recommendations. In addition to what I have already written nothing more comes to mind, because I plan to give a detailed account from Mexico that will contain information about my journey and other things that I had thought to send. The Juncker Brother will have learned from the last letter that through an Englishman how miserable the journey of the Assogues ships went, which had sailed to Mexico last summer. We had been supposed to ride with them.

Now let me tell you some of the circumstances that have heard from those who had been there, and have recently arrived on the same ship on the Saturday before Palm Sunday and have to await further instruction from the Lord Torres, the governor of the ocean, the same governor [Spanish]. One day before the weather attacked the ship, in evening the whole horizon around the ship was nothing but illuminated and on fire. Suddenly a big noise was heard which made the fish approach the ship with fear, so to speak, in such great numbers that the mariners or sailors could catch them in large quantities by hand, and some even flung themselves onto the ship.

Since such an occurrence had never happened to the crew until then, they understandably felt fear of a turbonade [Spanish: hurricane], as they later found out. Not only alone did the Franciscans have to throw their stuff into the ocean, but some had already prepared themselves to swim in case that the ship should get wrecked. Covered only with a shirt or a linen cloth, they had to throw their gowns into the water. This [later] meant that some who set foot on soil in Veracruz were wearing soldiers’ uniforms [after having changed].

The water rose on all four sides over the ship and onto it so that everyone, even the highest ranking, such as Señor Torres and the Archbishop, down to the lowest, were required to take the bomba or pump into their hands, in order to empty, for four days and nights, the ship of some of the water. In one of the ships even the Timon, that is, the door or steering rudder, as we say, [Neg. 51863] got lost, next to all sails and other pieces. May God protect us from such accidents! This year many ships went under. Only recently the ship that [transports] the sailing masts for the new ships, got into serious danger through a storm and now needs to get new masts itself. Before these Assogues could lead the other ships. The reason [for the accident is] that they depart late for Spain. Therefore this letter will reach, upon this opportunity, its desired goal. I hope the Juncker Brother
will take care of the request for a hand lamp, since I expect it with great hope. If there might be an opportunity to talk with the Honorable Ambassadors, may the Juncker Brother send them my most humble regards.

If they correspond, by chance, with the Archbishop or anyone else in Mexico or other places nearby, ask them to recommend me to him, and also let me know how I could use that opportunity to send and to receive my letters thereby. I do not doubt that the Juncker Brother together with his family, to whom I send my regards, especially to the beloved Honorable [Sister-in-law], will eagerly remember me, just as I think of them, especially today as we celebrate the feast day of Saint Joseph, a practice which was transferred here until today. If we do not depart this week, it will certainly happen the next, unless the winds do not let us out of the port, which, however, have been very good for us the whole month. The voyage over the sea, unless an accident will happen, that is, if the calma or the doldrums, sets in, will not last that long, and I hope that my deeply rooted illness will handle it better.

Recently all the missionaries have been treated very well by a ship captain who had arrived with those Assogues. But because the meal was taken on a peninsula [Spanish], I preferred not to eat those delicious foods than to repent such lustful experience with the returning evil [sickness]. With two other brothers I stayed at home alone.

Havana, April 3, 1731.
Comendo me in favores fraternos [Spanish: I commend myself to the brotherly favors],
the Highly Noble Honorable Brother’s
most submissive brother [Latin]
Philip [sic] Segesser S.J.

P.S.: The same way how the Franciscans had to suffer, so the servants of the Lord Archbishop and he himself had to suffer the same way.
Letter 43

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Tepotzotlan, June 18, 1731 (Neg. 51864)

Neg. ASM 51864
PA 437/586
No. 22

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

Do not be astonished my Juncker Brother, together with the Honorable Mother and the other relatives, that I am writing you so little from so far away. I am not writing with my quills since I have been in Mexico. Since I have been here for a while, not much has happened for me to write about. In part because after my fortunate arrival I was struck down with a strong and acute catarrh and an inflammation of both shins and needed to lie in bed. And in part because, after I regained my freedom from these ills I was preoccupied with my journey and in shopping for the necessary things (I have to rely only on 300 thaler, not counting the equipment for the church, which have been given to me by the King), I have to write on the journey to my mission (which has been assigned to me by the Archbishop to be Guadiána, where I am traveling at the moment. It is about 180 miles away from Mexico [City]).

As I was saying, I was received in Mexico, or in Guadalupe—an hour before Mexico, by the Father Provincial where he met us with the greatest delight. Guadalupe is a pilgrimage site to the image of a merciful lady, whose development I have studied [back home] in an ad-hoc vacans-comedy, and then practiced in a Haal [hall?]. Early this morning I offered Mass at the image, asking that our journey would be blessed, and anxiously thought of all my relatives. In Mexico City I have met Father Antonius Balthasar, who has been useful [Neg. 51865] and very helpful to me. He is not in the mission anymore because of a weakness of the eyes (disease), but he still does as much good in Mexico as if he were still in a most difficult mission. I am, through an arrangement by God (what I cannot doubt) assigned by the Father Provincial, at the request of the bishop of Guadiána to a new mission to which no Jesuit has ever been before, and this along with two other Germans, an Austrian and another from the Bohemian province who were sent to similar missions to convert the pagans there. Apparently it is over 500 miles away to the north of Guadiána, where I am supposed to baptize the heathens. The King had ordered many church equipments out of silver. We will have to take everything new with us for the church, which I will have to build.

May God accompany us on such a long and dangerous journey and may my dear relatives pray for me. Oh, what a comfort it would be for me, even one pagan, not to mention whole valleys and mountains, to convert to the true religion and to win for God? I don’t have time at the moment to write more; soon a longer letter will follow. Yesterday we have learned that Father Franciscus Stäz has been elected our General. One more thing I have to mention: the bishop of Guadiána did not want anyone but Germans for the new mission.
To my Honorable Mother my most humble commendations, and so to the rest of my siblings and friends. Especially I submit myself to the brotherly favors, from Tepotsotlan, a place 7 miles from Mexico City, June 18, 1731.

Highly Nobly and Honorable Brother’s most humble brother
Philipp Segesser S.J.

P.S.: Although I wrote this letter messily, it is still good enough in the end, I hope.
Highly Noble andHonorable Brother,

Although I intended to give an in-depth report of my very tedious travels, I will need to hold back my quill and save my intention for a more comfortable time. The reason for this is that the Honorable Bishop, in his great diligence and desire to help the heathens to their salvation, has not allowed me more time. The highest priority is for me to find the equipment to build houses and churches. Moreover, the local high officials leave me little quiet to complete the daily duties which require me to pay visits, and therefore seem to shorten my time, although not without the help of my companions.

The Juncker Brother will have received in the meantime a letter from Havana, an island at which we arrived after our voyage from Cadiz to Veracruz, then another one from Mexico, as I hope, from which he will have learned how things have developed until the current time. From Mexico City, from where we departed on June 17, up to here in Guadiána, where we arrived on July 19, I have been, God be praised, rather lucky and unlucky. Lucky because . . . A strike from my mule above the knee which destroyed my pocket watch, which has created a great nuisance for me (there is no clock or clock maker to be found out here), has made me incapable of riding, and necessitated sending for a coach, or forlon, from Sacatecas, the next city over, so that I could travel further.

I have arrived here in good health, and other than when bending my foot, I don’t have any more pain, which will go away in time as well. On the trip I left one of my companions, Father Ignacius Köller from the Bohemian province, in Sacatecas because of persistent diarrhea, from which he had suffered since we had left Mexico City, but until now he had not been able to fight it. For this reason, upon the order of the Honorable Bishop [Neg. 51867], Father Caspar Stiger from our province joined us. He got lost on his way up here by chance, and this, as I can only speculate, not without special arrangement by God, although he had been ordered to go to another mission near Caretschiki. Here he was ordered by the Reverend Father Rector and the Honorable Bishop to travel [with me] to the new mission, which gave me as well as him great comfort. Upon our arrival, Reverend Father Rector picked us up with a coach with six mules that could not have been painted more nicely. Tomorrow the Honorable Bishop will accompany us in the same way [with a coach] for a while on our way.

The remaining trip will last for 400 to 500 hours from here. And since the passage is unsafe because of the wild Indians, the protection of the soldiers will not fail to be there or on the way. The Honorable Bishop takes great care and has real concern for us. And he does not blink an eye [?] to
pay the amount of 800 thaler to procure necessary things. It must be known that those things that
cost in Europe, in Germany, half a gulden, here costs 4 to 5 thaler. Another good friend whom I
have met at another Jesuit colleague, upon the recommendation of Father Antonius Baltasar, is a
professor of Philosophy, who by way of one of his friends gave me most generously a horse, a mule,
two travel boxes, an aroba or 25 pounds of chocolate, a few plates of tin, as well as a few other
minor things I have not neglected to share things with him that the Honorable Mother and the
beloved siblings have sent me. I also gave gifts to the Honorable Bishop and others because gifts
are as necessary as they are pleasant for these people here. Everyone wants to receive gifts, although
they do not carry any titles.

I do not know how soon I will be able to follow this writing with another because the journey
is long, there are hardly any messengers, and the amount of work is huge, until I find table and place
to write. But my eagerness and dutifulness will not be lacking to send soon a very detailed report.
I would be extremely delighted if these few lines will reach the Honorable Mother, Juncker Brother,
the most beloved siblings, and all the other relatives in the best health. I recommend myself to them
all most dutifully and wish that they do not forget me in their holy prayers. I am also thinking of
them. May the Juncker Brother keep me in his highly treasured favors and may the Honorable
Mother and all the others accept my most friendly greetings.

Guadiána in America, August 1, 1731.
The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s
most humble brother
Philippus [sic] Segesser S.J.
Letter 45

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Without place or date [written on the trip to San Ignacio 1731] (Neg. 52015-52016)

Neg. ASM 52015
PA 437/586
[No. 4]

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

With these strange lines I give to understand, what I would especially like to make known to my Honorable Mother and Juncker Brother [particularly] so that not everything will be announced to everyone because it is of no importance. At first I thank you for the immensely proven diligence of motherly, brotherly, and all other dear siblings’ love. God will repay all of you a thousand times. I would like to wish that I could come up with something desirable [as a gift] in this land, because I do not live in a city.

There is nothing special or rare except for a parrot, whom I look after. He is also talkative and a good whistler. I would like to wish that he could display his capability in the father’s house. Because this cannot be, I hope to hear what everything costs, along with the little case that is coming for me. With the money it is best to adjust things. In particular, because I live in the mountains and in the wilderness, where a lot of wild animals are caught, and then also because occasionally some bezoar stones have been found and brought to me for purchase. I have already collected a few (may the Juncker Brother keep this for himself) and await a good opportunity to send them. In this land there is a good fruit which is very useful for different medicines. It is named gogófen and looks like an acorn but is not so round and has the taste of of a hazelnut. It is also very oily.

A merchant had suggested to me that I collect this fruit, because in Rome some priests greatly demand it. With this fruit and opportunity I will make sure to send safely some of it and of the other things mentioned above. Please forward the attached letters to the correct places because I know well that the letters cost a lot. I hope that they will reach the addressees, if necessary with some help [from you].

Besides, when another good opportunity arises to send me something arises, [I would appreciate it], because in this land there are few books and the living conditions are very bad. Therefore it is a pity what happens with the Carthusian pictures because they shrivel in the great heat. I have also not had the time to apply little tablets [pictures?] on them, although the Spanish people who live in this part of the world greatly appreciate them. If you have some stitched work, it would be of great demand here among the noble people. Small scissors and small knives, pins and needles, and for me white stockings out of linen thread would be appreciated. Those out of wool do not send because the cockroaches ruin everything. Please let me also have some socks out of the same thread. The heat is so great that one can hardly stand to wear a thin shirt or a thin summer coat. I have certainly seen some who have taken those off.
If there are some Salzburger child figurines, may they be little tablets with a saint [image] on it or other figures out of wax, or similar wares, everything would be well invested here, such as rosaries from the St. Brigit sisters, Roman indulgence pennies, etc. etc. The cut-out pictures are also very valuable and so the scapular. Some curiosities out of glass, like the coffee cups, are very rare here. Then any embroidered chalice cloths, if they are not already too refined, serving as models to be replicated here, would be very lovely, or any other goods.

[NEG. 52016] The Juncker Brother should mention these things as well as the others to my beloved siblings and friends, so that they will remember and put these items together to be sent to me if an opportunity should arise. I would like to express special gratitude to the College of Lucerne (I do not doubt that they are responsible for it) for the rich chasuble and all its attachments. This would also serve well in my church or in that of another people, wherever the holy Xaverius is a church patron, and wherever I will soon reside, both here and there, as the time [of the year] requires.

Would the Juncker Brother send the letter for the Father Rudolph wherever he might be at this time? And by the way, friendly greetings and my eternal thoughts to all the known Honorable Fathers, as well as to Lord Troxler and Lord Scholler, and so also convey my regards to my master composers at the court. I employ from time to time some of those arias out of sheer boredom.

To Francisca, if she is still in the service, or should come to the house, I also send my greetings, as well as to the Honorable Baumwart on the Gütsch,\footnote{Should she still be alive.} Saint Xavier’s rip I have found.\footnote{And finally, to all and everyone, if they ask about me, especially the Honorable Sister-in-law, to all my eager students and to my nephew Jost Heinrich I send my thousand recommendations and friendly greetings, with the pleading that all and everyone would think of me, and when that silver colored carrier [the moon] will pass, remember the most loyal servant and father who is circling in the silver mountains [God?], as I remember Him as well when I look at this night light so necessary for me (during the day the heat is so strong that one cannot travel). I hope that my dear friends then remember me at that moment. Would the Juncker Brother show the longer letter that I also wrote for the others to those whom I have already pointed out in the same.} When the little daughter begins to produce samples of her lace needlework, I would like to have some for the alba [alb] and the altar cloths or also for the white choir vestments etc.etc

Philippus
Letter 46

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Ignacio de Caborica, probably 1731, no date or location (Neg. 52018-52019)

Neg. ASM 52018
PA 437/587
[No. 2]

Dear Juncker Brother

That what I did not want to write in the bigger letter, so that it does not get in the wrong hands, I am writing to those alone at home, and it is not necessary to relate everything to the others because the Juncker Brother can get the other letter copied. He can send that copy to the present Father Provincial whose name is also included, and then send it afterwards through the Father Rector to Augspurg or where he, the Father Provincial himself might be at that time, and this after you have assessed whether the longer letter would please him more or not.

I hope the graceful God will keep everyone in good health, from the Honorable Mother and Juncker Brother down to the last one, which would be my comfort. When the Juncker Brother writes or has something to send me, he should recommend himself to and send such to the Lord Don Phelipe de Anassa in Cadiz, insofar as this then will be delivered to me more safely than through our Jesuit delivery system, which in many cases such as this small item cares very little. As already mentioned, until now, there has been no letter from the Juncker Brother.

I am sending this letter also through a lord who was with me during these days and who will travel to Mexico. He promised me that that this letter will be delivered to Spain by way of his well known friends, and from there to Lucerne, although he thinks that the mail has to be paid in Spain. This above mentioned Lord Philip de Anassa has a brother here who is the Capitan de esta Pimería alta [Spanish: the Captain of this Pimería Alta]. The latter is my best beneficiary who presented me with many gifts for my new mission and provided groceries. As long as I have been in my mission, he has [regularly] written to his Honorable brother in Cadiz that he should support my case in the best possible way. May I request from the Father Provincial that he send me the history of the province, which the late Father Agricola had begun to write, etc., apart from other (Neg. 52019) small books, which could be delivered to me securely through this opportunity.

What I have requested from the Juncker Brother to have sent to me, I await to receive with the greatest desire. The Juncker Brother should not forget to deliver the shotguns, and perhaps one for the small birds built in the same manner, which would be very useful here insofar as the the same birds as in Europe, like the finches, are found here, particularly small pigeons, which no one either catches or eats. Could the Juncker Brother also send me a little mold with a strong bottom or something like that where small pellets can be poured in. Here there is as much lead as silver. If the Juncker Brother could try to get some Grania Sancti Pauli, would help me and others, since I was already bitten once by an alagran [Spanish: scorpion]. I would also need wax to read for the Mass [hence candles], since there is little of it in this country and is very expensive. You do not need to send wicks here because such can finally be found at least in Mexico, even though they are very
expensive. It would be more very helpful to get the mentioned scapulars and rosaries from the sisters of the St. Brigit Order, and some of the Roman sanctity tablets [?], which I request in particular. And if I might have forgotten the carnation\textsuperscript{170} seeds in the register [list] of the many things, would the Juncker Brother send me such because they do not know anything about these flowers here.

Forgive me, Juncker Brother, for the urgency, but whom else do I have from whom I can request something that I desire, or from whom I can hope to get something, except for my own family. Incidentally, although I am quite satisfied with the will of God, I find myself in a rather tiresome place, where I need lots of patience. If I were to let things just go by, and only attended people on their sick bed, though it would be a good deed, etc., [it would not meet my own expectations]. God will predetermine everything, but I must confess that it is a little hard on me, as you can easily imagine, because my intentions do not develop well. How are the Honorable Mother, the Lady-in-law, Juncker Brother’s wife Barbara, Ma. [?] Anna, Elisabeth, Honorable Francisca in Hermetschwil, Honorable Sister of Rothausen, Honorable Aunt at the Ursula Sisters, Honorable Aunt at Bruch on the Sursee [convent in Lausanne]. How is the Juncker Cousin at the cathedral [Canon], Juncker Brother of Hochdorff, Father Henricus, Father Carl, Juncker Cousin Rusconi? All my brotherly greeting—also to the Francisca and Honorable Bauwirt, and the small Nephew.

Philipp.

[The next letter was not included in the transcription housed in the collection held by the Office of Ethnonhistorical Research at the Arizona State Museum, but it is included in the transcript kept in the Staatsarchiv Luzern. It easily proves to be one of the most important documents written by Segesser, shedding much light on how he approached San Xavier del Bac, what preparations and items were necessary, and how he wanted to set up his mission with the help of items to be shipped by his family to the New World. My translation is based on the transcription held in Lucerne and on the original in the Archive which I have carefully compared throughout to verify the correctness.\textsuperscript{171}]
Letter 47

Letter to his brother brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Xavier del Bac, December 15, 1731

(No copy in the ASM; see footnote)
PA 437/587
No. 3

Highly Noble and Honorable Juncker Brother, etc.

Before I begin with my report, I would like to extend my greetings first to the Honorable Mother, who is hopefully in good health, and to all other most beloved siblings, to the Most Reverent Canons at the cathedral, the Honorable Mayor in Surfen, and to all other beloved relatives, especially to those from Cousin Joan Baptist’s family, etc.

After I had written during my voyage various letters from different places to the Juncker Brother, I do not doubt that he must have clear and precise news of what has happened with me so far. In the meantime, since my departure from Spain, I have not received any letter from my dear relatives—not even by the help of the Virgin Mary, of whom I am thinking, however, every day, and to whose protection I submit myself all the time—except for a letter by the honorable Father General and another by the Father Provincial, who wishes to send his regards through me to the Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother. I hope that you [the brother] have extended my regards to the nephew and fulfilled his wish. These letters have been handed over to me by chance over a pretty long distance here in this land, at least more or less, and I have immediately responded to them.

Now I am reporting to the Honorable Brother that I have arrived here in completely good health, very near to my mission, because now I am missing only seventy or 80 miles, or ca. hundred hours. Here they do not know the system of counting in hours, and when you ask how far it is to this or that place, then they point with their finger to the sky and say, the sun will be located at that angle when you will arrive, etc. Now I am staying in the mission of Saint Ignacio in Pimas Altos or Pimeria alta run by a Father missionario called Father Augustin de Campos. He is a Spaniard and perhaps a friend of His Excellence, the Honorable Ambassador Señor Don Felix Cornejo, who resides in Cucera. Father [Augustin] has started this mission 39 years ago and kept it with great troubles and much work quite well until today. So, I am staying with this Father because he can instruct me now in the Pima language which he has learned better than anyone else, and in which he is regarded a master by everyone. It is only regrettable that now in his old age he rather talks in Spanish than in Pima, and that he lets me work here many days, even weeks on end, completely alone, since he is traveling in the meantime in other reductions, partly in business, partly in order to lure the wild barbarians from the mountains. Only recently he arrived here with a new group, whom he all feeds.

The place to which I have been ordered by the Father Visitator is called the valley of San Xavier del Vac, or the Saint Xaver del Vac, a name which a Father Missionarius had assigned who died ca. 20 years ago at a place three hours away from here, as an 80 years old man and at whose grave I recently offered Mass. He came from our province and was called, as the Indians tell...
me, Father Cino; he is said to have originated from Trento, a man whose indescribable effort and labor Father Augustin and everyone else in this country could not, as far as they knew him, praise enough. He was the very first who entered into this very remote region, he baptized many heathens, and showed other missionaries the way where to go and search for lost souls.

This valley where I am supposed to go, that is, the valley of Saint Xaverii del Vac, is very extensive and large, and is located pretty much to the north, and is, as the Indians tell me, very cold during the winter. From here it is at least 70 to 80 hours away, where I am supposed to build a house and a church. Beyond that is a region and Montaña [Spanish: mountain] which so far none of us [Jesuits] has traversed, although Father Augustin has gotten around much. But the Indians say that there are many people to be found, who are supposed to fall to me, God willing, and if I will have the [necessary] health.

It seems to me that I am much closer to my fatherland than you might think because I have travelled more than 700 hours from Mexico, and then the sea is very near to here both in the west and the north, the air and the weather very similar, except that it does not snow so often, although there is enough ice during that time of the year. The soil is good to grow what and much grain, which, however, is not well compatible with my nature [health] until I will be more used to it. If we are hence to find our end point, we might actually reach a landscape that is more similar to a European one. But more about that later.

In the meantime I must write about other things because I do not have them [available here]. I need them urgently, and have to beg you to get them for me. If I become too cumbersome to my Honorable Mother and the Honorable Brother in that regard, would you please remember that I am of the same blood as you and therefore turn to so confidentially to my next blood relatives. Moreover, this will make come true the prophecy of my Honorable Mother. She once said at an occasion when we were still younger, the Honorable Brother had hardly reached the age of six and always wanted to go with me and the Honorable Brother Jost Ranutij, wherever we had gone (but we did not [want him to come along] because he was still too young: Let him come, they will be happy one day when they can count on his favor, etc. And really, now I recognize that it has come true, so my Honorable Mother’s and the Honorable Brother’s grace are my greatest hope and my consolation. However, may you be able to assist me in any way over such long distance in anything? I at least answer: yes, I hope so, they will not deny me from the distance what I would surely have gotten from them if I were near them.

What is my request? Answer: a couple of things that I urgently need to establish a household, since I have nothing else but what I wear, apart from a few linen clothing and those things that the Honorable Mother and the others had sent me to Genoa, then those alms that the king had granted me, like to any of the missionaries, which comprise 300 and 50 thaler. The 50 thaler had been added because of the great distance, they serve to pay for necessary travels and have already been spent in Mexico. If you want to know what for, I will give you a little account so that you see how one travels here in this country.

First, I bought a mula (that is a mule) to ride on, which cost 60 thaler, without saddle and bridle. Saddle and what else is necessary: 15 thaler (I use thaler because one thaler counts here as much as one peß [peso?], which is the common currency here). Further, I bought three other mules to carry the matras and the other chests that contain necessary church objects which the king procured for me for a new church, that is, two [mules] at the price of 60, whereas one [mule], which is not as good, for 25, plus the necessary transportation saddles. What was added to the costs during the journey does not belong on the accounting list because other donors provided it. For a servant
with his mule for the way up to Gundiáná, that is about a third of the way: 40 thaler. For the other servant together with a mule from there up to San Bonaventura (he went, so to speak, two thirds of the way with us since the rest of the way we went from house to house, that is, we went with servants, whom we had requested from good people, and who did hard labor for us (if you may call it that): 80 thaler, an amount which the other Fathers and companions shared and which has to be paid in total [?]. In total that is already 280 thaler. The pedujas, or travel chests, made out of animal skin, cost 23 thaler; chocolate, which is so necessary for the journey (after all, the servants also want to drink twice a day, that is the custom), and a couple of other things: two better arrobas (the arroba is 25 pounds): 24 thaler; two lesser [arrobas] for the servants: 14 thaler. Two arrobas sugar which is needed for the chocolate, hence also necessary: 8 thaler and a half; for the blankets (that are necessary) to cover everything and to protect from the rain: 15 thaler, then ropes and cords which are necessary at such occasions: 3 thaler; then other things I cannot remember and that had to be bought by necessity, such as the shoe horns for the mules, which cost 6 thaler in Mexico, 19 and a half in Ciguagua (because they are more expensive here, like everywhere else). Altogether: 103 thaler.

If you add all up, what remains for shoes and clothing, for travel food (this all had to be acquired in Mexico)? And if the bill is bigger than the given alms, then think of that what helped us [Segesser], namely what the generosity of the Honorable Mother’s and the most beloved siblings had contributed, what God may recompense them thousand-fold. After this accounting, which explains enough how little has remained, that is, nothing, I may certainly be entitled to beg and request? Yes, that is it what the following is aiming for. However, I do not ask for money, but items tantamount to money. I would not request those if all that were available in America that will be useful and very necessary for my household. These are things that seem to be contemptible and hardly worth to be shipped over such a distance. Nevertheless, I do not request them without good reason.

Although one might think that a missionarius should ignore such matters, you must not forget that the Indians, when the Father missionarius does not help them with food and clothing, all escape back into the mountains and the caves, where they have been called and lured forth with great trouble. But how will that what I have requested help the Indians? Answer: One follows from the other. For instance: I request a scythe. With this I can make hay because grass is growing in great quantities here. The cows eat hay, so they can be raised in the shed (otherwise, if kept on the field, they stay wild). These provide me with milk, the milk in turn makes cheese and butter (truly, a very appropriate discourse for me!), for the cheese and the butter I can barter for other parcels of land, clothing, salt, spices, etc., as here in this land items are bartered, item for item. So, when I urgently plead with you, then for objects that I can barter here best with. Other barter with wheat and corn [maize], everyone barters as he can so that he can maintain a mission.

Therefore I beg the Honorable Mother, the Honorable Brother, and the many friends to send me as soon as possible the following items listed below in a well-kept container. [The list] does not contain everything what I am looking for in these land, otherwise I would not cause you all that trouble, but look rather for money than for other things.

First, would the Honorable Brother send me the weapons of our coat of arms, that is, three or four Seges or scythes, then ca. 6 sickles because here the grain or grass is pulled out of the soil only with bare hands or with knives. Would he also add for one of the seges a handle as a model, because here they cannot create anything without being able to see it. For the sickles I will certainly find a good use. For a new garden I need a little weeding pick, and since the Honorable Brother in
Hochdorff will help me with that; I am asking for 2 such weeding picks, one larger, one smaller one, then ca. 6 pairs of Schlengel [perhaps wooden frames?] for hanging up the skin covers substituting for windows. Since there is no glass here, the air flows pretty much [freely] through the room, wherever there is a little opening. Most [houses] have, instead of a window, space for a door which stays open day and night without an [actual] door. I really live in such a domicile, and the chest is not even good enough as a table to write this [letter] on.

May the Honorable Brother not forget and take the trouble upon himself to go to the saw mill and copy on an extra piece of paper how it has been built, especially that little iron wheel that pushes the wood in front of itself. Would the Juncker Brother please have such a wheel get made, plus the necessary iron part or pins that hold the wheel on the inside so that it does not move backwards. Then send this piece of paper to me with a clear explanation of the whole construction, because this thing will be very useful for me. Here there is nothing of that kind, and when you want to have a little board, then two have to saw a tree apart with great effort. [I know], what I am requesting is really a strange matter.

Further, would the Juncker Brother send me two or more wooden clamps which the carpenters use when they glue the boards together. One at least complete so that I can put and glue together the others [after this model —here with a drawing by Segesser], which would, if being shipped whole, take too much space. They have roughly that form [allegedly a drawing on the margin, but that is not in the original].

Without seeing them, the Indians cannot make any thread. Now on to the household items. First, would the Juncker Brother send a little butter barrel, as big as the chest will allow to pack, or put better: a butter churner in which the fresh butter is made; a bigger one can be made here, after the little one has been seen. Further two chopping knives, a little frying pan, roughly of the size as those out of brass used at fairs in which they tend to roast the almonds; a little grill on which you can cook roughly as much as the head of a wee goat; one or two skimming ladles, a deep soup ladle out of copper; a little roast spit, as long as it might fit into the chest [?], with a curved handle so that a black Indian [?] can replicate it more easily, of that kind with which you barbecue the larks, and as you can see drawn on the margin; then a few more wooden ladles because here you cannot find either the wood or the craftsman for such things.

Here in the silver mountains there are hardly any silver spoons among us Fathers Missionaries, such as yesterday when I was called to Himuri to another Father to discuss some business with the Honorable Capitan of this Pimería alta. We four at at the table had not more than two spoons, one fork, and one knife, the little salt was in a broken husk of a fruit. A Dios.

One thing I would have almost forgotten: for the scythes and sickles we also need a whetting stick [stone?] and a hammer so that you can sharpen them. Hence I am also requesting that. Item, verum hoc soli Domino Fratri commendo, ne vanitatis me arguunt imprudentes, si audirent, velit mihi sclopetam fortem ad jaculandum scilicet lupos, leones, cervos, etc., quorum hic copia ait, mittere, tum ut in periculis me defendam, tum ut allogitias [when I am in danger, I defend myself, and then, like the others] if I catch a little venison in the wilderness or on a long journey. You can find those also among the others, but still, sub rosa. prudenti satis [Latin: in secret (through the rose, or flower, an idiomatic phrase here): a word to the wise is sufficient].

The pipe can be taken out of the stem and kept well in the butter churner, together with the stem, the wiper, the clams, etc., so that nothing can be damaged. That what I have underlined the Juncker Brother should, after he has read it, delete it so that no foreign eyes can see it. In the meantime, while the Juncker Brother will be busy procuring these mentioned items, would the
Honorable Sisters please collect in a bag seed of hamp, flax, white and yellow turnip, red turnip, fennel, anis, and caraway, each in a separate bag [note the contradiction!] and give it to the Juncker Brother, well dried and fresh to be packed. The Jesuit gardener might perhaps be helpful in those matters. Moreover, would the Honorable or Mademoiselle Sister Elisabeth write down for me recepies for some meals.

I do not need any for cakes since I probably still have the Honorable Mother’s letter in which she gives me good instruction, but certainly for other dough products, such as rice, pies, almond tarts, gingerbread, marzipan, rabbit ears, priest caps, biscuits, almond donuts, and others, such as sugar rose, etc., then also add some baking molds out of wood or terracotta, also some to make gingerbread.

Indeed, these are many things, but nothing without a good purpose, as I will explain in longer letter and as you will understand. These earthly things are necessary here to win over souls. I beg the Honorable Mother for muscat oil which has partly given me back my health, partly has kept me healthy, whereas my two companions [fellow missionaries] who also travel to new missions, which are, however, a good distance closer [more to the south], have been dangerously ill (that is, the one, without me knowing how he is doing now). All this the Honorable Brother may pack in a chest, address it to Genoa to that lord, whom Lord Juan Phelipe de Anssa (who is a brother of the Honorable Capitan of these lands and who will be inclined to help me as a merchant of Cadiz) will indicate to the Honorable Brother in a special letter. If he might not write, then ship the chest to him with the request to forward it as soon as possible to his Honorable Brother in the Presidio de Fronteras a Pimeria alta. After all, the Honorable Capitan assures me that this is the safest and fastest delivery. This lord is almost our father here who procures for us what can be found in this country and what is necessary for us. He is like a county governor in place of a king here in this land. The address of the mentioned lord is simply: A mi Señor Don Juan Phelipe de Anssa D. g. m. a. en la Ciudad de Cadiz.

Herewith, with the full confidence in the brotherly love and help, and in that of the most beloved relatives, I conclude, as I have started, with a filial greeting to the Honorable Mother from San Ignacio, December 15, 1731. A happy blissful new year!

Your Honorable Brother’s
most loyal brother
Philippus Segesser de la Compania de Jhs. Missio de S. Xav. del Vac en Pima alta.

P.S.: Would the Honorable Brother forward the letter that is attached to this one to the Father Provincial, if he is still in this position, via the Father Rector? If he no longer holds that position, would you take a new envelope and send it to the mentioned Father Rector wherever he might stay now? Everything what the Juncker Brother will spend for the requested items I will certainly recompense him and the others in time and to the degree as the mission is making progress, and this in a way that is very well known to me.

P.S.S.: I have forgotten one more thing. Would the Honorable Brother send me one or two covers for my pocket watch? It will be of the size as the one that the Juncker Brother had received from the Honorable sister. Since I am missing such cover, [my watch] has already broken twice, and you can neither find a glass nor a cover in Spain, because I have looked for one there as already. My
recommendations to the beloved Honorable Wife, greetings to the Nephew, and tell him he should come and see me in his vacations.

On an attached sheet [?; not identifiable in the file, but here translated from the transcript in the Lucerne State Archive]:

If the Juncker Brother has not yet sent the requested items, would you please add also: 6 scissors to shear sheep, of which I have half a dozen. Item [Latin: also] good, strong, round and flat crow bars, ca. half a dozen, of every kind, also smaller ones.

Item [Latin: also]. A dozen whetting stones.

Item. 2 or four hatchets or picks.

Item. 2 gardening knives

Item. 12 small pie moulds.

On a second sheet (PA 437/587, No. 3) the letter continues:

(Neg. 52018) Although I thought to have written down everything, many things are still lacking, but hopefully I will not forget anything. Could the Juncker Brother send me a carpenter’s plane iron (whatever it is called), or a round plane, which is needed for the first stage to clean the board; and another one that makes a smooth piece, as they are needed to make tablets, etc. Then also a small fretsaw. Different types of small nepperlein or drills; two or four clean and somewhat thick glass bottles, so that they cannot break easily, serving to carry the wine and water for the Holy Mass; and a bigger and also strong bottle to carry along for the baptism water, which for first time yesterday I needed on the way to a sick Indian whom I had to baptize.

Each needs to be equipped with a good screw lid. One sugar scale, if available with yellow [brass] weights. And if possible, a gold scale, also with the weights. A smaller garden shovel; a flat iron at least with two stones [for keeping it hot]177; one or two kitchen funnels; a kitchen syringe; a baking form [?], if you come across one incidentally, one smaller trowel to spread the butter cream; a roll of the good black lighter;178 also Salui or Salbina [sage] leaves a good bag full, and if seeds are available, then also the seeds, and so as well from mint. A few sun-dried plums, with the seeds; some freshly harvested walnuts and hazel nut; chestnuts with their spiny cupules to seed, even if such fruits will not grow. I know well that twigs would be needed [to plant trees], but we will attempt what can be attempted, etc.

If a baking form for the rose cakes can be found, then the Honorable sister should write to me how the dough is to be made for it. Also, would the Juncker Brother [please] write in detail how cheese is made? How to get the sourness or keslup [rennet], and when it is to be poured into the kettle. How much, one or two spoons full and when the salt is to be mixed with the cheese, etc. Therefore the Juncker Brother should send me also the cloths that are needed for this. One or two hoops, which can be made soft with water, so that they can fit into the box, according to the length etc. One or two ladles with which the cheese will be taken out with. Some rolls or those yellow brass objects which one needs to sift the milk or to clean it.

All that I really need because I cannot get it here. But it is not necessary that the Juncker Brother inform others about this cheese making business, iam intelligit me [Latin: as he will certainly understand me].179 We are from Helvetia etc. If I can produce some cheese, I will soon be
able to improve my mission, etc. Would the Juncker Brother put everything on one bill? Everything that cost money should be orderly (pointed out) displayed,

The payment, as I have written on the margin, will surely come upon opportunity with great thanks. And the Juncker Brother therefore should not doubt that. Whether it is in Munich, or in the Mexican province, in Munich, Rome or elsewhere, wherever the costs occur, all the expenses will exactly be paid.

Therefore, [Neg. 52019] the Juncker Brother will not miss one heller. My brother’s love and agility, and also the ease with which I can present my requests to him, are the reasons why I desire [these things] from my beloved friends. I will briefly summarize my writing to list what is desired so that the Juncker Brother can see easier what is asked for:

**Iron goods**

3 or 4 Sythes or *Seges*\(^{180}\) – A handle, etc.
A hammer and whatever is necessary for whetting.
6 sickles
6 couples of ordinary pegs [?] for the window frames together with the hooks and locks, etc.
1 little sawmill wheel
2 chopping knives
1 little frying pan
1 or 2 lard skimmers
1 lard skimmer
1 deep ladle out of copper, to hand out the soup
1 roast spit
1 small saw
some drills
1 or 2 cake servers
1 baking mold for a rose cake, out of iron,\(^{181}\) if it does not cost too much
1 plane with two knives
1 curved plane or scratch plane
a small plane for wooden frames
1 shovel for small work in the garden

Would the Juncker Brother cover everything that is out of iron with tallow, or, even better, cover it with chalk.

**Tools out of iron** [cont.]
2 little ladles
1 little roast spit
1 sugar scale
1 gold scale, if it is not too expensive
1 kitchen syringe
some pins
1 ladle to melt lead in it
1 strong but small shotgun, etc.
**Wooden objects**
1 small butter churner
some wooden ladles
some baking moulds for gingerbread
2 spoons for the cheese [production]
1 or two round frames for the cheese
some cloth or the yellow brass sifter to clean the milk

**Diverse goods**
1 or 2 covers
for the pocket watch
2 or 4 glass bottles
1 larger one for ca.
one quart in measurement
several molds out of clay
muscat oil
several cloths for the cheese
black [gun] power
2 bags for the powder

**Seeds etc.**
hemp seed
flax seed
white turnip seed
yellow turnip seed
Bavarian turnip seed
red turnip seed
fennel seed
caraway seed
anis seed
*salfi* or *Salbina* [sage ]
mint
cherry

**Tree seeds**
plums
walnut
hazelnut
chestnut

**Give me recipes for:**
pie
almond pie
gingerbread
marzipan
rabbit ears
priest caps
*mosratzing*¹⁹²
biscuits (diverse)
sugar roses
sugar-coated almonds (forgot it again)
how to make cheese, etc.

If my dear sisters remember anything else, please let them add it here.
Letter 48

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Xavier del Bac, June 8, 1732 (Neg. 51922-51924)

Neg. ASM 51922
PA 437/587
[No. 10, 11, or 13]

I hope that in the time that I am writing this letter, various others that I had sent to my Juncker Brother, either via Rome or through other opportunities, and especially the one that I last wrote in Santo Ignacio, where I had to stay for half a year until my two companions had recovered from their long lasting sickness. That letter was delivered through Honorable Capitan of this Pimería, then through his acquaintance in Mexico City, then from there it was sent to his Honorable Brother in Cadiz, and then got delivered at home. All these letters will sufficiently indicate how much I am constantly thinking of my family, how I pray every day that they will be received by the Honorable. But since I cannot communicate this personally, the beautiful night light, the moon, will have to do it, which so often rises to remind my dear friends that Father Philippe sends his greetings to all of them and begs them not to forget him.

If there is, by chance, an eclipse, or a moon darkness, think that it might not go well with me because this pleasant messenger hides. In truth, there is much bitter sweat because I live in a country where you cannot find a similarly rational person around you for miles. There are plenty of heathens, innumerable ones, whom you would regard, if the Christian faith would not allow it, not as people but as irrational animals. Although there are some who had been baptized as small children by Father Kino, pious member of my province who was born in Trento, and by another Father, Augustin de Campos, a Spaniard, who traversed wide lands, I find in them no other Christian sign than falsified names which they received during the baptism.

They cannot remember anything else and call themselves now Cósua, instead of Joseph, or Mánal, instead of Maria. The main place where I am staying mostly is in a valley that extends 60 leagues in the length but much more in circumference. It is a very hot place, although in winter, as the Indians say, it becomes very cold because it is situated toward the north.

One cannot find a single rock in the dirt, but it is not too sandy either and has a very good pasture for cattle on the sides where the little bit of water flows, which is used to water the fields and which is used by the folks. There are therefore (the water) a lot of fights, and I, because I am far from there, am confronted with an uncomfortable situation. In the meantime, I have built a hut made out of dirt and straw, where I live and give Holy Mass, as soon as I will have the wax candles.

My jurisdiction reaches one and half a day, concerning the ground before me and behind me. I have found until now no end [of this region]. And the last place known, which is 5 to 6 days far from here, which is called Casas Grandes [plural!] or big houses, from which the most important person of this part of America called Montesumma is said to have descended from. The time and health are mostly guessed, the inhabitants of this land support themselves with what they harvest. Because this land is full of mice, these serves them instead of larks. This folk are very lazy to work,
suffers great hunger, therefore I must give them food to eat all the time, when they work for me. The food consists of Turkish corn [maize], which they call in Spanish posolé. I must always be careful that they do not take the hot corn out of the kettle with their bare hands. They are clever in stealing and do not think badly about it because they do not know what is good or bad, since they live like animals. The people, women and men are brown-skinned. Concerning their clothing, they are covered just with rugs, which they make out of cotton. The small children run around as nature has made them [naked]. I hope with time to teach them some decency. But at the present I have to work with myself, since I in fact wear scraps which I have received more than three years ago as new in Munich, and I have worn them daily on this journey.

I did get another dress in Spain, which I cannot use during the construction, instead it only serves the same way as the coat of the holy hermit served Saint Anthony. If this one rips [wears out], where would I find another one in such distant lands. Enough of this, it would be better to report from here to Rome etc. It appears that this part of the earth has until now been the residence of the living Satan, although I do not find any particular superstition here. However, here are many who have their dialogue with the devil who appears to them in different shape, once in that of a wolf, then in that of an ape, often as a black moor, etc. He instructs them how they can harm people and kill them. One of these devils has killed more than 40 people in the winter in my mission. The devil puts a horrible material into their mouths or stomach, which the devil’s servants [these are now the Indians] copy by blowing it through a certain feather-pipe into the bodies of those whom they want to harm, without being noticed. Those then die after few days with great pain, because there are no remedies to be found here. I have seen it all with my own eyes and stood next to the death beds of many, as I will later describe it in greater detail.

Every night my Indians tend to repeat their immense screams, dances, and singing until the early morning so that I cannot find any restful sleep, or find a means to stop such things. After all, it is necessary to win over these minds with love step by step so that they, tired of the Father, do not attack and kill him, although such a death would be more desirable if I imagine that I will not receive any more good in my present life. After all, where does one find another existence in these countries? By and by one makes progress Herewith I report to my Honorable Mother, to Juncker Brother, to the dearest siblings, to Honorable Canon of the cathedral, and to all my relatives that I am truly located in a arduous part of the world, and this as most unworthy servant of the mission in the Pima vineyard of the Lord, master builder of a new place out of straw and clay, guardian, repair man, cook, shepherd of sheep, goats, and cattle, sacristan, and Christian teacher or instructor of the heathens.

This place is located in the main mission de San Xavier del Bac, as the Juncker Brother will have already learned from a previous letter, and as you can see from the attached piece of paper, which I include because a Jesuit, unknown to me, has sent it from a city in Mexico, three days of travel away from her, although neither I nor the Father Provincial had known where I might end up later, especially since this arrangement had been made by the Father Visitator of the Pimería alta half a year later, without him knowing anything of that piece of paper, since I had not seen that Father Visitator until then.

With this piece of paper follows another one which will explain my request that I wrote from San Ignacio and which might not yet have been met. I beg the Juncker Brother to rush to fulfill my wishes since I do not find anything here but Heaven and earth, etc.

My most humble recommendaton to my Honorable Mother, the siblings, and the Honorable Canon
at the Cathedral, and to all my dear relatives. To my dear brother and his most beloved wife as usual from San Xavier del Bac, June 8, 1732.

The Highly Noble and Honorable Brother’s in the heart most submissive brother, Philippus Segesser S.J.
Letter 49

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Ignacio de Cabórica, September 10, 1732 (Neg. 51925-51930) [contemporary transcription by another hand]

Neg. ASM 51925
PA 437/586
[No. 8]

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

Before I begin to write, I must remind the Juncker Brother that I live in another land, and therefore already have the habit to include foreign words and foreign hand writing because I have often to do the grinding work of a secretary and have to write much daily in a foreign language. If therefore foreign letters get mixed into this letter, which really happens against my own will, such as the letter x in the Spanish language which is used instead of the Latin ‘r,’ like in the word ‘Praenobilis,’ [Highly Noble], which looks more like an ’x’ than an ’r.’ Or if I write half an ,o’ instead of the dot over the ,i’, as we do in the German language on the ’u’, as I can see in the other word that I have used above, so instead of ,ich’ [German: I], as I wrote, of if I write half an ‘o’ above the letter ‘I’ instead of the dot, as we do in the German language on the ‘u,’ as you can see in the other word above, and if many other problems occur, I hope the Juncker Brother will attribute this to the new habits. However, I make every effort to practice my first language as well as possible.

Since I have departed from Spain, I have not received a letter from the Juncker Brother. One, of which the Honorable Mother reported, was delivered to me in my mission San Xavier del Bac to my great comfort.183 May God grant the Honorable Mother and all the most beloved relatives and friends, both within the Society of Jesus [Jesuits] and outside, happiness, good health, and His divine blessing. I hope that if the fleet will arrive safely, also to receive news how things stand in my dear fatherland and in the most beloved province, what changes have occurred in the meantime. The Juncker Brother knows well how much I desire to hear of that. In the meantime I sent home diverse letters from various locations and by diverse opportunities.

I hope that it will not be a problem to pay the additional costs for the mail. From here to Spain all letters are delivered free of charge, both on land and on water, which is the reason why I wrote several letters, since I have good reason to suspect that some will get lost. In this way one or the other will reach you, my relatives at the most beloved location. I also hope that my letters will be pleasing to you, although they cost a bit more insofar as in each letter, as I believe, special topics have been addressed. The present letter is being sent from the mission San Ignacio de Pimeria alta. There are several locations, both in Pimeria bácha [baja] as in Sonóra, Sinalóa, or other countries, with the name of San Ignacio.

I am presently stationed, as I have said already in the last letter, in the mentioned mission San Ignacio which the old missionary Father Augustin de Campos, as I have said already several times, began in this region, and who [Neg. 51926] therefore can and must be called Fundator. The reason...
why I am staying here is, first, the decision by my superiors. After all, both here in Europe as well as in America every member of the Jesuit Society has to observe the commands of the superiors, even if one might have found something more necessary and better, because *obedientia plus est quam victima* [obedience counts more than being a victim]; note well *victima*, because in this part of the world one can easily get into the hands of the wild Indians, who care for nothing else but to hurt the converted Indians, to murder the foreigners, and thus they lead their own lives because apart from stealing they have nothing else to do.

The other reason for my stay here is Father Augustin himself who in truth needs a companion, partly because of his health and old age, partly because of the people here so that they get the proper teaching both in temporal and in spiritual matter insofar as a missionary has to take care of everything. Moreover, the Father does not want to have any other companion than me because he knows that I have inherited my Honorable Mother’s nature [character] and strive in every respect to fulfill the office of a medical orderly. I have to try to chase away the mosquitoes and flies all the time. Further, the Father recognizes well that I can and must have patience with the old man, *senectus est mirabilis* [old age is admirable], and this is true. Not to forget, three boys who have served the Father so far have fallen sick as well, apart from many other Christians and Indians, who all need care.

So, there is enough to do everywhere. Many sicknesses arise due to the fruit because since there is a shortage of food and the Indians suffer from hunger, they do not await the time when the fruit have ripened. Instead, they eat them when they are still mostly green, as soon as they have developed just a little. Another sickness results from an excess of blood, as I can clearly recognize from the rotting corpses, which causes me not little disgust, insofar as I have to assist those who are dying, of whom there are many. But who can do blood-letting here [he uses two different words for it here]. I myself would have a need, but we are in America where you cannot find that what would be necessary. God must help, and so the holy sign of the cross.

The Father tries hard to convince the Superiors to make me stay here in this mission not only until his death, but also afterwards, and that another missionary Father will be sent in my place to the mission of San Xavier del Bac. But I do not know whether the Superiors will be pleased with that idea. In the meantime I must take care of everything and expect what decision will be made. At least my Indians desire to have me here. Only last week they sent here two of the nobles [Neg. 51927] to fetch me, but I sent them back, promising them firmly that I would get to their place soon, after I had given each of them as a gift a rosary out of glass and a kitchen knife, along with some tobacco, all things that are appreciated here more than anything else. I have the firm intention to travel there as soon as my old Father will feel a little better, in order to take care of things there.

I will give orders to the soldiers who guard my huts and their contents, and will also give comfort to the old man [Father], although the way [to the Indians] and back comprises more than hundred and twenty miles. I have also the intention to visit the distant peoples of this part of the known world, to instruct them as much as possible in spiritual matters as far as possible on that occasion, to baptize who requires it [babies], and help those who are going up to Heaven. Altogether, the Juncker Nephew Joan Baptist could help me in striving to gain access to Heaven.

As before, we have a great heat, and so a drought because it [normally] does not rain for months, but now in the current month the weather here is very dangerous. We have repeated downpours, which certainly make the earth turn green [with growth], whereas afterwards it will be bone-dry [?] and without grass. Now, however, everything swell up [in the riverbeds or washes] like in Europe in Spring, which makes it dangerous for the travelers because the creeks swell high up and
there are no bridges in this country. [There is no need for them] because the Indians do not ruin their
clothes [they do not wear any] although they wade through such creeks. Even more damage cause
the heavy rain showers because they easily penetrate the roofs of our living quarters which are made
out of nothing but earth. Since we have to live in such muck, all our things are also in danger
to get wet [ruined]. If you wonder why we do not take more precaution, I answer as follows: we build
many houses basically out of air [because we have nothing]. When we approach our task, there are
no picks, no hoes, no hammers, no saws, indeed, not even the necessary wood or proper stones.
There is no stone available far and wide proper for sharpening a knife, although there are enough
mountains in the entire Pimería, as well as the entire americá.

Moreover, at this time of the year there are many dangerous and poisonous vermin,
mosquitoes and flies without end. Here are toads as big as a fully grown royal hare, or küngelein,
as it is called at home, although one of them frightened me not little recently [Neg. 51928] which
hopped around the altar during my Mass. Then there are more snakes, vipers, alagran [scorpions],
poisonous and spiders than you can fend off, so I can never sleep safely. Everything comes to life
around the bed at night. There are countless rats and mice. Two dangerous wounds from a poisonous
scorpion bite in two of the feet [of some of the people there] I immediately healed these within days
with the gracia Sancti Pauli although they were already greatly swollen up and filled with pus.

Above I mentioned that apart from this month or water time [monsoon] everything is
expensive and dry, so [you might wonder], is there no food in this country? Answer: God be praised,
the Father Augustin had harvested five to six hundred müt [bushel] wheat and several müt¹⁸⁵ wheat.
That is, they were ripped off the stock by the Indians’ hands since there are very few sickles to be
found. Moreover, the Father has a most delightful and large garden, perhaps a quarter of an hour in
length [walking], with plenty of grapes growing there to make enough wine for the offering of Mass.
Would God give that wax would also grow there. We would collect it every day. There are various
types of peaches, diverse types of figs, pomegranates, kütten [cotton], sugar cane, melons, Sandiás,
pumpkin, etc. etc., everything in great quantities.

I only regret that I cannot eat anything of it because these fruit immediately cause me
discomfort, although others eat of it totally safely and with pleasure. The next month we will harvest
the Turkish corn, or maize, as they call it here and in Spain, at least thousand or more bushel, since
the milpa or fields, are doing very well. We also hope to harvest several bushels of frijol, or beans,
everything food for the Indians and for our nourishment. Hence, not everything has to be expensive
and dry! However, apart from the planting, everything stays true what I have said above. hoc opus
hic labor. [this work requires labor]. It is necessary for the production of this essential food that the
people or the main place of the mission settle near a constantly flowing water so that through the
help of our industriousness and labor everything can be irrigated and watered at the convenient time,
which requires, however, a lot of heavy work. For that reason the horse is constantly saddled so that
the Father can look around in all places to observe whether the Indians do their jobs or not. Mind
you, if the Father does not supervise everything, it all fails. The Indians do not care. The Father does
not find many reliable servants who would take over this worry from the Father. Only today I sent
away [fired] a young guy [Neg. 51929] who did not steal little from my old Father. There are many
like him who act like the [mountain?] lions who show up often (one Indian from this mission had
killed one only a few days ago and brought it here. They are called tigers, wolves, coyotes, which
are a little smaller than the wolves and are of the type of foxes and hurt the cattle on the fields. So,
these local wolves rob and steal wherever they can, and there is no opportunity to hang those.

It might sound harsh, yet it is true: I live in a country where there are neither laws nor kings,
and even God is not known here. Therefore there is much work to shape the heathens and also those who are already converted into a form. In fact, the Spaniards, that is the Capitan huius profidii totius Piméria alta [who controls the entire Pimería alta] together with some neighbors marched out against the wild heathens who just last week attacked some soldiers in their sleep and killed them. These Indians are called Seris, others de las Bócas, and others are called Tiburónes, who are mostly defected Christians who want to live only their own freedom and rather suffer from hunger in their mountains than to work in the community. For that reason they organize raids from time to time and rob everything which they encounter.

They steal horses, mules, oxen and cows, they kill more than just a few people; hence they cause great damage, burn down at night the huts of the Indians, in which many have already burnt alive. They live from what they conquer. Against these, as I have said, the Spaniards marched into the mountains in order to find them and to eliminate them because those had received many times the royal favor in vain. We expect here these days the desired return of this campaign. There are, however, much worse enemies in this country who are called apázaes [Apaches], of whom I have already written previously and of whom I will, if my work and time will permit me as much, and as I have it in mind, report more about in my expanded letter. This is the reason [for the lack of my time]: when I have to travel only a half day length, several armed soldiers have to accompany me who can protect me in the case of an emergency.

I can hardly travel from one tribe to the other, that is to those who belong to the mission, because everywhere there are enemies. If they murdered me, it would not even serve for martyrdom because such enemies know nothing of faith [they would simply kill out of hostility, and not for religious reasons]. But they simply do not want to tolerate foreigners in their land, they live by themselves for their freedom, and approach everyone with their hatred and sharpen it. Irrespective of all that I go there with God’s protection [Neg. 51930] where I am being called, be it far or near, just as the emergency requires it, and so far always without running in danger, which I attribute to the eager prayer of my dear relatives who are never going to forget me, just as I beg all my Highly Honorable friends in my most beloved and highly esteemed province to think of me in their holy sacrifices and prayers, so that God may keep me in response to that for a long time and with the desired results in these lands.

After all, although I am the least useful, my early death, like the death of the other few companions [the other missionaries] who live in this vast land, would cause not a little loss. Within these ten months that I have lived in this country I have learned so much of this rather difficult language with the help of God that I [could] give my first sermon in the open church on the feast day of the Holy Father, and since then three more, hoping for the good use and comfort of the Indians who expressed their thanks and said: the Father has made a good beginning.

Friends, this paper is running out. Be well, most beloved Honorable Brother, and this all the days. et die omnibus, omnibus salutem plurimam. de San Ignacio nuestro Pactne en Piméria alta [Latin: My best greetings to everyone from San Ignacio] nuestro Pactne en Piméria alta [Spanish: our Saint in Pimería alta] Septiembre 9, 10, 1732.

Phelire [sic] Segesser S.J.
Letter 50

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Los Santos Angeles de Guévavi, May 1st, 1733 (Neg. 52017)

Neg. ASM 52017
PA 437/586
[No. 5]187

Highly Noble Brother,

The letter from July 15 in the year 1731 which was the answer to my letter that I had sent via Havana by way of an English ship, I have received on the 29th of March, which is the feast day of my Juncker Brother. I am pleased at the well being of the dear relatives and especially the Honorable Mother, who God willing has been blessed with more time to live. I regret the passing away of all those who have died by now and whom God has, as I hope, called to the eternal life and whom he will grant the desired reward which they have earned in their life with diligent work and service for God. May they all rest in eternal peace.

Because there is just too much work, again I cannot write more than that I am, praised be the Lord, well and see myself forced to travel around constantly like the eternally wandering Jew so that I cannot take care of my own matters. Once I am here, then there, and while I am writing this letter, my colleague [fellow Jesuit], Father Ignatius Keller from the Bohemian province, asks me to visit him, since he is dangerously ill.188 I went from Santo Ignacio, where I have assisted the old Father Missionary Augustín de Campos for a long time, to Saint Xavier del Bac, just a few days away from here. I had hardly been there for a short time, when I got news that another Father, Father Juan Baptista Grashover from the Viennese province, has become very ill.

I then hurried and within a day’s journey that usually takes three, I found him in his final throes. I offered Mass, and, because I was still sober [had not eaten anything], I imparted upon him the holy sacrament, and soon after he passed away with a clear mind. Would the Juncker Brother make the effort to visit a Father in the college so that he can write a letter to the Viennese province, so that his acquaintance can remember him in the Holy Mass offering? He passed away on the 27th of March in this mission, named Guevavi de los Angeles. Rumor has it that an Indian poisoned him and so helped him to enter the next life. However, for what reason, I just cannot figure out, and this is very uncertain. Also, this father had arrived in this country already ill, as the above mentioned Father Ignatius, to whom I am presently hurrying, and neither of them had, up to this hour, fully recovered. It is more believable that he died of natural causes.

Now I am ordered by my Superiors also to take care of the neighboring mission, apart from my own, because of the lack of missionaries. Many missions have lost these and are in the process of dissolution [disarray]. I hope that another will come, namely the Father Casparus Stiger from my province, who would be very pleasing to me, as long as his other mission, as the Father Provincial writes, will not be disadvantaged by his leaving. God willing, my Juncker Brother, if Carl Kruz had stayed in the Society and would have traveled here later, he would have been able to get more things
into order. However, I hope he will not forget me, and also may find his eternal holiness in that position which he chose for himself. Hence, I have enough to do, more than is possible. I have received no other letter in the meantime. But I have sent some, which have been shipped and have hopefully arrived. Therefore I ask my Juncker Brother, Honorable Mother, and my dear friends soon to send one to me via Lord Philip de Ansa who resides in Cadiz, so that I can give my things a better form [arrange them better?], if it pleases God in the first place, and if the Indians let me live. Of that, however, I cannot be so sure. Can’t write anymore, I must hurry.

Greetings from all my heart and especially to the Honorable Mother, á Dios to Juncker Brother, Guebavi de los Angeles that is now my residence, which is closer than San Xavier del Bac, as you can see above.

The 1st of May, 1733
Most faithful Brother
Phelip [sic] Segesser, S.J.
Letter 51

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. Los Santos Angeles de Guévavi and San Xavier del Back, May 7, 1734 (Neg. 52009-52012)

Neg. ASM 52009
PA 437/586
[No. 7]

Highly Noble and Honorable Brother,

With greatest longing I have awaited a letter from my beloved friends, but my hope has betrayed me, because as Father Antonius Balthasar of Mexico has written to me, nothing has arrived for me. I hope that the Honorable Mother and all dear relatives are in good health, what I request in my almost daily Mass offerings, or in my other imperfect devotions, from the highest God, as my dutiful obligation requires. The past year a letter from my brother was delivered to me to which I answered immediately. But as the above mentioned Father Balthasar writes, the letter sent with the returning fleet that sank not far from Havána was also lost. (From Havana I had sent home a letter via an English Sea Captain, and that letter arrived safely, of which I have news). Since the time of my departure from Mexico I have sent several letters from here, but without getting an answer. The present letter I will send, together with an answer to the Bishop Guadiána or Durango who has written to me, and sent me a few dozen rosaries for the Indians and fifty pounds of chocolate for me. He is now called to a more noble bishopric in Puebla de los Angéles.

This bishop is very eager to win over the non-believers, and he writes to me that he wants to request other missionaries, namely missionaries from the Bavarian province. He has promised me that he will not forget me and the other two Fathers Missionaries, Father Caspar Stiger and Father Ignatius Xavery Keller from the Bohemian province. He will assist us further the more his income will grow. I have written of this Bishop many other times. I hope he will very soon forward this letter when a good opportunity arises.

In this past year I had to overcome a very painful and also dangerous illness which I had contracted on a journey when I wanted to visit new tribes. Consequently I had been forced to return to my mission without having achieved anything. God knows how difficult it was. Here I had no doctor or nurse. An old woman cooked me some broth, which I soon enough could no longer stand. I quickly sent for my fellow Father to prepare me for the journey to the Heavens. Then my Indians carried me on their shoulders in a chair for five days to Cucurpe where the Father Rector of this Pimería alta lives. It would not have taken much to get me there as a dead person. I awaited my recovery, but no other medicine was found than Senes leaves.¹⁸⁹

Five months later I found God’s help. During that time my Indians [back home] had thought I was dead and had dispersed and abandoned fields and houses. Upon my return I found only few remaining. Some believed that [Neg. 52010] the cause of my illness had been an old Indian, who was thought to be a sorcerer, what in Spanish is called a Hechizero, and in my mission stusbuináriama.
The Indians brought him to me right after my return to Cucurpe, which might tell you something about whether the Indians like or dislike the new Padres Misioneros. There are countless other sorcerers, who do very much to prevent the acceptances of the true faith insofar as they organize at night their assemblies and invite whole village communities. They dance the whole night, thus organize big celebrations and sponsalia [wedding festivities]. In this way they marry that young girl and that boy with each who last the longest in the dance. Instead of the music instruments they perform entertainment with horrible screams that have neither sound nor melody. This is a very annoying matter for the Father Missionary because all this prevents him from finding sleep. I have often told them to go further away, but this was all in vain, and you cannot employ a harsh tone if the missionary does not want to live alone in the mission [the Indians would simply leave him]. In these very dances they exact punishment for those who had an affair with a woman other than their own in the following way.

When a woman dies, they all get together, and if they know that some of them had an affair with her, they place all the guilty ones in the middle. The noblest person among all present reprimands them for their evil deed. Then comes the oldest woman and strikes each one of them on the back with a twig. With this she returns them into the state of innocence. This and many other forms of wrong behavior makes much work for us to stop such customs. It works, bit by bit, not everything at once. Once my Gubernator, or the most noble person in the mission, told me that almost every time one person appears at this dance clothed as the Spaniards, talks with them in their own language, but they do not know where he is coming from.

It is certain that these sorcerers talk with the devil in various places and appear in various manners because not long ago one such sorcerer told me a story about another one which the devil had revealed to him. That proved to be true, but no one else there had known about it except for him whose concern it was. This account [I provide] just on the side because I simply remembered it. Returning to the sorcerers, this old Indian [the one who had been brought to him as the alleged culprit of his sickness] voluntarily admitted without any beating that he had wanted to murder me, and when the Father Rector asked for what reason, he answered that the devil had ordered him to do so. The reason was that if he the sorcerer would not kill the Father Missionary, the latter would take the sorcerer and put him into iron and fetters, as it happened to the one who said that he had killed the Father Johannis Baptista Grashoven who had arrived with me at this mission and at whose death bed I had stood guard, and who had come from the Austrian province and had been younger than me. All this happened, as I told you, in Cucurpe. But after the death of the Father I never ordered that the other sorcerer was to be taken to the fortress [presidio].

Instead, the Indians themselves had come and told me that they did not want to tolerate him in [Neg. 52011] the mission and had the order to deliver him to the Capitan. I then answered: If you find him guilty, then do what you consider the right thing. I have not seen anything evil done by him. They never returned to me to give me any news. Instead they took him to the fortress, ca. four to five days away from here, where he has to work with his feet shackled. So, I do not know whether there are more lies than truth in all those reports [events]. Father Rector ordered the old sorcerer (if he truly is one) to take away that with which he had wanted to harm me. He left, for this purpose and goal, witnesses with him, and told me nothing about it. But I had a very disturbed night, and roughly in the middle of the night I felt a strike from my heart, and a really bitter matter went through my mouth.

In the morning they asked me how I had slept. I told them about that [my experience]. But the Father Rector told me that I should feel comforted, the sorcerer had already taken out the
maleficium [evil], meaning the sorcerer who was shackled in the prison, or, as we say, was sitting in the pillars. The maleficium was as big as a pea that the sorcerer spat out of his mouth. Once this had happened, the problem was gone hic datur actio indistans [Latin: the action precedes without interruption], and until today I cannot understand how it was possible that the sorcerer could have spat that out of his mouth that he had magically put into my body, that is, he in the prison, I in the bed, in the house of the Father Rectoris. May it be as it is, from that time on I recovered, but the sickness still lasted five whole months, after which I could return to my mission and brought with me the Father Caspar Stiger from our province. He had been in the meantime in Terra Humára in Caresúci after the death of Father Neúman. That had been my [original?] mission that had been much more comforting than the one that I have to administer now, but obedientia plus est, quám victima [Latin: obedience counts more than being a victim]. In the meantime that above mentioned sorcerer has escaped, together with the shackles. He got here and asked me for forgiveness. He said that he never did anything evil against me, although he had voluntarily admitted the opposite.

I do not know what I should believe. I urged him never to harm either myself or my Indians; instead he should remain quiet. Together with eleven others who are the eldest in the mission, I washed his feet on Thursday in the Holy Week, and offered him a rich Indian meal, as is the custom here. During my sickness my mission strongly declined, and it is deplorable that under those circumstances we had not been able to find any substitutes. Perhaps the two Fathers Procuratores Mexicáni will bring a few new ones with them who will find enough to do for their eagerness. If they only demonstrate patience on the journey, which is, in truth, cumbersome, and if they finally arrive at their goal the mission, they will not regret all the labor and suffering of the journey. I would like it if some well-known Fathers in this Pimería alta from my province would come here, because I and the two other Fathers are establishing a mission for newly discovered tribes and see before us an infinite field of many non-baptized people and yet cannot proceed to them if we want to avoid that the newly converted return to their old customs [Häpten or Häfften?] in the absence of the shepherd [priest].

The reason why we are so few here is because, [Neg. 52012] disregarding some from other provinces (except for the Italians, some of whom are not far from here, that is, two, three weeks travel time), no one wants to face the hardship at the beginning of new missions. Instead they strive to be placed in cities or already well-established missions. I asked a Father when I was in Sevilla why so few from Spain travel to Mexico. He answered: In the Philippines there is more sugar. [Segesser continues:] But the sugar does not sustain us if one does not use it modestly. On the side, it is certainly true, the Father Missionarius must understand everything and must be present everywhere.

Why are these people so dumb and do nothing, unless the Father orders them and drives them on like the oxen? I have a small boy with me already for three years: with him it is necessary to tell from early in the morning until the evening: do this, do that. And if it a daily matter, it is for him as if he had never seen or heard of it, and they are almost all of the same kind. You do not find one who is a little more reasonable, until they are better educated. This takes effort and hard work, and therefore not everyone wants to take the bait [meaning: the potential missionaries].

At various occasions I have requested in other letters necessary house equipment, apart from all that what is listed, and I did not get more of an answer than that they already await the opportunity to ship the hand-held fishing rod [?], but even that has not yet arrived. I have also asked my Juncker Brother, he should address the objects to Lord Philip de Anssa in Cadiz. The following label would be enough: Al Sr. Dn. Juan Phelipe de Anssa, ge. D. m. a. en la ciudad de Cadiz, Cadiz.
I have recommended to him this matter urgently, asking that he should send these and other goods to his Honorable Brother, who is the Capitan of these lands and lives in the fortress Frontéras, as I have mentioned above, and who is my great benefactor and friend. He will pay for everything properly. On this occasion I would like to request that the books of the *Historia Provincia* [History of the Jesuit Province], as I have asked the Father Provincial already several times, together with the Rules and the little book for the Exercitia, be sent. May the Juncker Brother be helpful for his brother in the great distance by forwarding this request.

I hear that the Christian potentates [in Europe] stand in arms against each other. Here we are surrounded by enemies every day, and we are not safe any night [from the danger] that they might climb down from their caves and mountain tops and set fire to us, kill animals and people. I enjoy a little more security than others. May God grant that these wild people will finally surrender and crawl to Christ’s cross. More I do not have to report, the opportunity [messenger] to send the letter wants to leave; hence would the Juncker Brother extend my most friendly greetings to my Highly Honorable Superior of the province, to my spiritual fathers, my professors, my best acquaintance, not to forget Father Rudolph, then especially to my most beloved Honorable Mother, Honorable Brother, and Honorable Canon Secretario, my most beloved sisters, female and male cousins.

I repeat these wishes every day, and pray that the messenger who invariably arrives every night, the bright moon Luna, remind you of this greeting so that you do not forget me in your prayer, as I promise not to forget, coming from Guebavi and San Xavier del Bac, May 7, 1734.

I do not have more time to read over what I have written, written [sic], etc. [Latin]

My most Honorable Brother’s
most loyal brother Phelipe Segesser de la
Compa. de Jhs. en Pimas altas Missionero
Letter 52

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa. June 27, 1735 (Neg. 51983-51986)

Neg. ASM 51983
PA 437/586
[No. 1]

Highly Honorable and most beloved Brother!

There is no question that the highly desired letter by my Honorable Brother, after I had longed for such good news, brought me particular comfort. May the most gracious God grant that the present reply letter may encounter the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, and all the most beloved relatives in the best of health, to whom all I am sending my dutiful recommendations. Herewith I inform you that I presently, may God be thanked, feel somewhat better, but the constant breakouts into sweat exhaust me somewhat. This letter is the response to the one which my Juncker Brother sent on April 25 of the last year before he departed for his position as bailiff in the county of Thurgau. In the meantime I hope that two other of my letters, if not more, have arrived. The last one will hopefully give you extensive information how I spent the time until then and how I discovered the reason why I was sick for two years in a row and had little hope to prolong my life here on earth because of these two sicknesses. I composed that letter on the fortress called Frontéras where I was lying sick in bed for three months and was cared for until my recovery by the particularly diligent treatment of the wife of the Honorable Captain Joan Baptist de Anssa, which did not cause only little costs.

The Father Visitator from the Pimería alta, that is situated in the north, transferred me to the Pimería bacho (: baja : ), situated toward the south, not far from his mission, roughly 40 miles distance, to the mission, called Tecoripa de Sancto Francisco Borgia. At that time I had, as reported, recovered, although this area cannot be compared with that of the Pimería Alta, or in San Xavier del Bác or Guebavi. And this is already an old mission, although no Father has lived here for several years because of a lack of such a one (Father Missionariorum). Hence it can be regarded like a new mission. There I could arrange things according to my own ideas. [However], I have to be pleased with what I find here. The Indians have not be educated as I would have liked it, and it is difficult to remove their deeply rooted habits since they have been instructed in Spanish, not in German.¹⁹⁰

Moreover, the administration is much more difficult and extensive than in the first mission because of the rough mountains and the stone-covered, overgrown, wild roads where you can hardly preserve the sleeves on your arm because it is necessary at times to push your way through thorns and shrubs. I cannot understand how the Indians slip through without getting wounded. Because of the fact that my villages are located in all four directions, and because these mountains are filled with silver, there are many Spaniards in this region, whom I help [in religious terms] out of good will because their priest, a worldly priest, that is, no Religioso [the Padres Missionary alone are responsible for the Indians], is already an old gentleman and can no longer
follow through with his duties in distant locations. Moreover, there are several wild tribes on my
side who live in the black mountain and live in such a wide radius that one does not know their limit,
as far as I can tell from my excursions within this first half year in order to to call them (: that is
many)\textsuperscript{191} together. I assembled a comunity, began building a church and a house, and soon, God
willing, will return there to reemphasize better the matter.

At the moment I am busy with the harvest, which does not go well because the earth and the
whole place are extremely hot and begin to burn (the sun is shining the whole day, it is like in a
baking oven, and so the hot winds have completely dried up the creeks). Since it does not usually
start to rain in these lands before the month of July, everything is withered on the field and in my
garden that cost me so much bitter sweat. Nevertheless, although there is no moisture in the
mountains where there is nothing but rocks and stones, we have at this time a fruit in the size of an
apple which is blood-red within, tasting so sweet and well. I have hardly ever eaten a better fruit.

The Spaniards call it Pitáia, the Indians tatat.\textsuperscript{192} The peel is covered with small thorns, so you
have to handle it carefully to avoid injury. Next to this fruit, there is another that ripens at this time
as well, the type of which I have seen in the garden in Ingolstadt and is called the Indian fig. It also
has its thorns and is equally tasty and good to eat. I have planted those fruit all over the garden. The
braid which grows out of the fat leaves, so to speak, is the fruit. Carefully remove \textsuperscript{[Neg. 51985]} the
little thorns, cut it apart with a knife, take out the interior; it is very juicy when you eat it. I report
about it because if such fruit would come shooting up in Ingolstadt, which I do not doubt, eat those
without fear. These fruit substitute for me the sweet cherries, plums, sour cherries, and many pears,
etc. God gives and sends everywhere [His gifts] with which man can refresh himself.

The preceding I wrote in my mission, the following in the mission of my Father Visitator,
whereto I went for some business. Before, however, I had been called to a sick Indian 80 miles away
who immediately died after having done confession and having received the last unction. When I
returned home, already several messengers called me to another mission for an assembly of
missionary Fathers because of important matters. I had hardly time to change the shirt wet from
sweat and black from dust because I had been forced to travel at day and night. I am sitting already
enough on the horse saddle.

This very moment a messenger arrives from Mexico who had been sent from this mission.
He delivers a letter from Father Antoni Balthasar in which the latter reports that the little chest that
had been delivered safely to Mexico via the late Hispanic Resident Don Felix Cornejo, from that
time on had been lost because the merchant who was supposed to deliver it to me suffered from
bankruptcy and then, having sold his wares, escaped to a place called wadalachára [Guadalajara].
Hence, I have hardly any hope to receive that little chest. I wonder where might have happened to
it. I would like to find out where it suffered from shipwreck here on earth. I will not give up to
investigate the matter. In the meantime it feels as if I had received it, and I recognize well the
particular good intention of my beloved Honorable Mother, siblings, and especially of my Juncker
Brother. May God recompense you for it thousand fold and do not feel bad [about the loss] because
I feel as if I had received it. This loss serves as a reminder the next time to pay more attention and
to be more careful.

The Father Balthasar had had good intentions, but with a bad outcome. Don Phelipe de Anssa
already reported to me via his brother Capitan in Fronteras of the the other little box, informing me
that he will send it safely with the fleet. But the fleet is not expected in Veracruz until the month of
October. I hope this will guarantee a secure delivery because that Lord very much appreciates me
and has done much good to me. \textsuperscript{[Neg. 51986]} He had really sent me some poisonous herbs with
which one can cure a dead sheep, calf, or horse as if with salt. Once the poison has penetrated the meat, one places that subsequently at various locations so that the wolves or coyotes (these are a little bigger than the foxes in our fatherland, and the country here is full with them), and also the [mountain] lions eat of it and thus die. These herbs are deadly for all animals that have hair, or for birds. The tigers you cannot kill with this poison because they do not eat sick or killed animals, unless it kills them itself. For instance [Latin], the tiger kills a calf or cow, horse or mule today, but tomorrow it will not eat of it anymore; instead it kills another; so every day it takes the life of a new animal. In a few days, before I left from my mission, such a tiger animal had killed 17 young and old horses, and I do not know how much it has hurt me since then. The Indians tend to catch this tiger with their hunting dogs and kill it with their arrows. But I have lost such a dog some time ago, and there is no other in the neighborhood.

Hence I expect with greatest desire the above mentioned box because of its content. Moreover, this year I have had great misfortune with the herd of sheep because all lambs were lost and many of the older sheep, without knowing what sickness they had. Evil is mixed with the good, and the good is mixed with the evil [Latin]. But all the time there is more evil than good. The worst evil is that the Father Missionarius has to deal with these things more than, so to speak, with the spiritual matters. These earthly concerns are so necessary, since without them no soul can be rescued since if the Indian, who does not care for anything, does not get to eat and receive clothing, they go searching for food in the mountains by hunting wild animals, collecting fruit and roots, which for them taste better than what find well cooked in the house of the Father Missionary, etc. etc.

I regret the hostility of the European crowned heads. May God grant everyone the desired peace. I beg my Juncker Brother to send me precise news about fortunate and unfortunate events. We in these lands also have enough bickering. Now the sheet comes to an end, so I have to recommend myself, and send my greetings, to all my acquaintance in the Society of Jesus, etc., and this, against my wish, too briefly, to the motherly and brotherly favors, from Tecoripa, June 27, 1735.

My Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother Philippus Segesser S. J.
Letter 53

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa, May 1, 1736 (Neg. 51987-51990)

Neg. ASM 51987
PA 437/588
[No. 3]

Tecoripa 1st of May 1736
on this day, after 3 years my bindband has finally arrived. Father Gaspar Stiger is doing very well. I could not miss the opportunity that I could send a letter from here to Mexico, although I am very busy, and to let you know about my [good] health (may God be praised), since there is nothing more important here in these lands. I do not doubt that some letters might have arrived by now in which I report about my activities here. If only the war events would not prevent the correspondence from working properly. The fact that I have to fear those would explain the long silence by my most beloved Honorable Brother since I have not received any other but the one in which I got news that the letter sent from Cadiz to Lord Philipp de Ansa had arrived and that the same Lord was expecting the departure of the fleet. So far we have no news of the fleet, and the entire country is worried that it might have suffered from a shipwreck, or might have fallen into the hands of the enemy. May this be as is, at any rate the letter did not arrive, how much we had hoped so.

I would like not to think that with this [loss of the fleet] my hope has sunk into the water. In these countries we live with fortune and misfortune, just as it happens, and we do not have any security. In the last letter I reported that the letter sent via Lord Felix Cornejó to this part of the world was lost. Now, [Neg. 51988] I can truly report the very opposite, and the Holy Anthony seems not to have forgotten me because a few days ago I received the news that another merchant is bringing one of the things with him from the same place at which they were supposed to have been lost. That merchant has not yet arrived. I wrote to him and daily expect the answer. According to all descriptions the lost sheep will be found, of which I will immediately report [once found]. Here we also suffer from constant warfare which, though not as bloody, still prove to be very disadvantageous to our necessary business.

We have to fear the more hostility the more our spiritual exercises require a holy time. I believe that I have already written in another letter that the Indians in California have killed two *Patres misionarios* [Spanish]. The soldiers were dispatched there, together with their captain or general, but they could not yet do anything against those unfaithful ones because they had fled into the mountains and because the land is impenetrable due to the many thorns and bushes, which have many thorns. Hence they could not get to them. Instead they have to sea and hear how they [the Indians] mock at them. The Fathers there live very poorly. I sent them a few days ago some bags with flour on my mules. They also receive from various places ground corn [maize] flour since the land there is so desolate. Except for some grapes for the Mass offering, some sugar cane, and very little rice [Neg. 51989] nothing can be found there, except the fish that are being caught plentifully in the sea.
Between California [here: Baja California] and our land there is an arm of the sea, ca. 24 hours boat-ride away [the next section is getting very fragmentary] (and my mission helps other missions, and vice versa, so when I must travel toward mid-night, so when I am sending something to them who are the missions of the Yaquis (: jaquis:) . These people have already been converted for some time. Nevertheless, during Holy Week they killed six of my horses and one mule, and 20 affert or mares of another Lord, and ate them because a cold wind froze their fruit on the field, and now they suffer great hunger. Every day some come with salt begging for corn [maize] or wheat. Their land, by itself, is very fertile since a river, which could be called [compared to] the Nile, irrigates every year, when it rains in this part of the world, which happens in the month of Brach = August, the soil so well that they can sow and harvest the rest of the year, although it never rains [again]. Their fruit consist of corn [maize], peas, chick-peas, and lentils.

They raise many sheep and goats, with which they barter. Since they cannot grow wheat, it is necessary that, who live in another part of the earth, help them, although we as well have very little [good] soil for wheat, which is irrigated with a little cup. With that cup from which I and my Indians [normally] drink, and water the garden, we sow the seeds, even if it does not rain much in the month of August. We still have hope to collect some [Neg. 51990] kernels of corn [maize]. But that is the only substance from which we maintain our mission, along with the large cattle that must contribute their own. All that requires great caution so that they [the Indians] do not eat up everything in one day. This people lives like the bird in the air: what they have or find, they devour in one day, and they do not think of the next day. After all, what do not find in the plain, they search for in the mountains, even if it has to be snakes.

In the mission where I had been before the situation is very bad, [and the Indians] are rebellious. Honorable Captain Joan Baptista de Anssa wrote me a very sad letter [expressing his regret] that he could not find a means to pacify the Indians. He would like me to go [back] there. The Father Caspar Stiger (: who has been sick and useless so far and got sick in that very same mission where I had been before), and another Father, the late Joan Baptist Grashover from the Austrian province, wrote to me (as I have already told you) that the Indians would like to have me as their first Pater Missionarum. But at present I am at such a work-intensive mission, to which are attached three and many more new tribes, so I would not know why I would need more. Nevertheless, everything will be up to the decision by the superiors. If they order me to go there, I will do so.

The unrest of the mentioned tribes in the Pimería alta, where I used to be, results from one person that I do not need to mention. It is lamentable that just one such person can bring about such conditions. The situation for our Fathers in Mexico is much worse because the chapter along with the bishop requires the tithe from our estates, which has never been given so far, demanding it down to the penny. And because the Superiors point out their privileges and the favors which the king has so far granted us all, the members of the chapters have excommunicated our administrators, brethren of our Society, thus given the people reason to develop a very negative opinion of us creatures. Commonly the bishop is also Viceroy, so we would lose both the worldly as well as the spiritual law case.

Truly, I have to take care of the entire process, which heats up my head. Two Fathers were sent to Madrid, but with little hope because the Viceroy has great influence at court. Hence, there is enough war in the entire world. May God graciously intervene! I have also a good pile of newspapers and announcements from Europe, but I do not know whether I will have that much time to read through it all. Since such accounts are biased, [Neg. 51989] I will wait for news from my Juncker Brother, certainly shorter but more reliable, about the European politics.
I trust that the Honorable Mother and all the other beloved relatives are in good health, which will be my only comfort to learn. Herewith I ask the Juncker Brother to send my filial greeting to the Honorable Mother; my most humble recommendation to the Honorable Cousins, the Canons, and to my Honorable Brother. May they accept the present letter as if addressed to them personally. My most humble recommendation to the Honorable Aunt in Maria-Hilf, and all the other residents there, whom I will keep in my eternal memory; to the Honorable Aunt in the Bruch, and the Honorable Aunt in the convent of Maria Hilf, and wherever else my duties require to send me greetings. My brotherly love to my ecclesiastical and secular Honorable Sisters [Neg. 51988]; my continuous loyalty to Mademoiselle Sister Elisabeth, if I still can call her by that name [meaning: she could have married already], and thousand-fold greetings to everyone else who thinks of me. May the young Honorable Nephew not forget me in his innocent prayer. Would he give me the comfort with a text written by his hand to know how his studies are coming along. Not the least I recommend myself to the Juncker Brother, may he report to all my most beloved acquaintances in the College, or wherever they might be, at occasion tell them of my continuous loyalty and memory, combined with the request that they do not forget me either in their eager prayer. ne, cúm [Neg. 51987] alys praedicavero, ipsus ego reprobus evadam [Latin: lest I die fallen, although I will have prayed for others].

As I am writing this, some Spanish villagers [people] call me to a mine two days travel away from here to be available for the Easter season and to help some sick persons. Hence, I do not have more time to write, and as I am about to complete this letter, the above mentioned little chest (may God be thanked, and thanks to the Holy Anthony!) is delivered. Since my curiosity is great, I notice that it has already been opened. but I do not have time to search through it. I will soon write another letter and prove news about everything. In the meantime, I remain, most humbly recommending myself to all your holy prayers, from Tecoripa in the Pimeria bacha (: baja:) or the lower Pimeri, your most loyal brother,

Philippus Segesser S.J.

[In the file, this letter is followed by a copy, in another hand.]
Letter 54

Letter to his mother Anna Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi and his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa. July 1st, 1736 (Neg. 51991-51994)

Highly Born Honorable Mother + Highly Noble and Honorable Brother

I hope that this will be by now the last letter that I will send from here through a special messenger to Mexico to Father Johannes Antonius Balthasar, to whom I entrust it in the best possible way, ready for its journey to Europe, wishing that it will arrive before the other one in which I reported at the end how the little box, shipped by the late Honorable Resident Felix Cornega Alleman, was handed over to me on the first of the month of May as a precious and highly pleasant bindtbandt, after I had already thought that it had been lost. It was kept [somewhere] for three years, but stored poorly. I already wrote that it had been opened. Now it is necessary to report what was taken out of it, God knows who put his thievery hands into it. It seems that he must have been a scholar since although some of the best things are missing, he seems to have paid respect to one or the other item to leave for me.195

For example, of the two dozen little knives he let me have 4 from each type. The necklaces out of silver got stuck to his hands. The little scissor will serve him to cut his long fingers; the 54 needlework pictures obviously pleased him so much that he did not leave me one. Nevertheless, he was very much indebted to the Saint Ignacio and the Saint Xaver, therefore he served himself with the images painted on copper plates. At the images of the city halls he obviously was fascinated by the tallow, so he blindly grabbed into the box. He showed great devotion toward the sweat cloths made out of gauze, and also toward the 5 pictures with images of biers. Of the 41 cut-out images he left me one. Since the money bag was empty, he showed little interest in it; of the 33 velbet prints he left me. Because he eagerly wanted to get his absolution, he kept the four dozen rosaries. The virginal figures out of wire (?) also attracted his eyes. He must have had a particular love for the Christ child, therefore he served himself with the two Salzburg child figurines.

Of the disks with the images of saints I did not see any. These are all those things that are esteemed in these lands. On the side, I was surprised that he did not recognize the images of Christ’s passion, did not understand how to use the lamps, did not have an idea how to use the blessed water, nor did he know how to brew coffee, otherwise he would not have left me those mentioned items that arrived well. There are only some small leaves and a broken glass of some soft cheese that have arrived. That soft cheese, Salzburg child figurines, saintly disks, and rosaries from the sisters of the St. Brigit Order are all things that are greatly appreciated here and are well invested. My Judge in my mission, when he saw the Salzburg child figurine, was about to become foolish out of [burning] desire and asked me what it would cost; he would be willing to pay for it at any price,
even if one were to cost four cows. For a while I left him dangling, but then I gave him some as gifts. Such tribal judges are like the county administrators of small territories [back home]. Their task consists of keeping everything in good order and to deliver the necessary workers; therefore the Father Missionarius must be on good terms with them, etc.

Now let me turn to the answer to the letters that I have received both with the box and otherwise. First, I received one from my Honorable Mother with the mentioned box. Since it arrived here together with all the other things, it was written more than three years ago. Let me add that I have received recently another letter from my Honorable Mother written on August 15 of the last year, delivered via Lord Philip de Anssa who resides in Cadiz, who sent it to his Honorable Brother Juan Bautista de Anssa, who in turn shipped it to me. I received the sent letter with greatest heart-felt comfort, considering that the all-gracious God has preserved my most beloved Honorable Mother until then in good strength, and will, as I hope, also protect her, granting her His divine blessing for the accumulation of overabundant material and spiritual goods. In that letter I really recognize the most gracious care of my Honorable Mother and the brotherly love of my most beloved siblings. Herewith I am saying thousand-fold thanks to all and everyone who cares to think of me in my little worth and to display this with so pleasant things.

The only thing that I truly regret is that I live in such a remote place of the earth where there is nothing valuable that I could send to demonstrate my filial and brotherly commitment in turn. There is, however, only available what the Heavens granted me: an equivalent Mass offering and hard labor. This is what the wilderness cannot take away from me: that I am mindful of my obligation and observe myself, as I have written already elsewhere, that they think equally of me when the ordinary messenger, that is, the full moon, sends all my dutiful greetings and recommendations. [Neg. 51993] I am pleased about the recovery and better health of my Honorable Brother and Canon at the Cathedral, as well as about that of my Juncker Brother-in-law, which the dear God Himself may prolong, and grant them whatever will serve for their advantage and God’s honor.

I am sorry to hear that my Juncker Carl Krus has died so early, since he left the worldly estate so easily [joined a convent]. There is no counsel beyond God's counsel. I hear, the Mademoiselle Canoness has finally decided to select the sweeter estate. I wish best luck to her, may God grant that she will soon send me a devotional altar boy because apart from one [whom I have here], it is almost impossible to teach any of them the prayers [to memorize], especially since I have very little time because of the many travels to open their mind. They do not want to understand anything but in their Pima language. So far the answer to the last letter of my Honorable Mother, from which you can learn that the letter arrived here even before a year had passed. Hence, this is the most secure opportunity to send the letter and all the other things to me.

I have also received news that the little chest that had been shipped via this opportunity has arrived with the fleet and has been handed over via the above mentioned Lord Captain Don Juan Bautista de Anssa. I am certain that it will be delivered to me like a merchant’s good safely into my hands. The Lord Brother Philipp de Anssa also reported to the mentioned Captain that those that I had sent to my friends with the last but one fleet had been lost when those two ships went under in the channel of the Bahamas.196 But I do not know anymore what I had written about and to whom.

Two letters from my Juncker Brother, one outside, the other within the box, were delivered to me, the one on July 2, 1732, the other on 12 [December] 1733, for both of which I say my most dutiful thanks for the news about one and the other person of whom the Juncker Brother reminded me, both still living as those beloved who have died. What I now would like to request particularly,
and what I think I have already written the other time, pertains to the military development since the news that reach us here are very much biased against the Holy Roman Empire and very much in favor of France and Spain. I hope that [Neg. 51994] the Juncker Brother has successfully completed his term as county administrator of Thurgau and has happily returned home. I attribute those general evils and persecutions to the judgments of God, which will have given without doubt cause for many good thoughts. Herewith I want to hope that the angered Heavens will be mollified. I exceedingly appreciate the attached letter from my Highly Honorable Honorable Aunt, former Superior in Maria Hilf [convent], as well as being graciously remembered by the present Honorable Superior, as well by the entire highly honorable assembly. I return most dutifully all required respect and send my most friendly greetings to all, especially my dear old acquaintants and former friends, just as they are, so I am, according to our mutual agreement, thinking of them, which they should not doubt. I thank them for the pleasant gifts, although they also suffered some damage.

I do not want to neglect the Highly Honorable Maria Josepha Fluder in my mind, who has dignified herself with sending me as gifts the precious ‘Mary- Help’ images. May God grant Her Honor long and worthy years. For Maria Margaritha Hirt’s and Mademoiselle Prudentia Pfiffer’s spiritual memory I have already pleaded with God. In addition, I wish that all Highly Honorable Ladies and Sisters in Maria Hilf [convent] enjoy best health. May my Highly Honorable Honorable Aunt, Mademoiselle Ursula, not doubt that I will dutifully observe my obligation, and so the Highly Honorable Honorable Mademoiselle Agatha in dem Bruch, whose extraordinary lines demonstrate her holy heart and the best disposition exceedingly well to me. I assure her of my obligation and that I will not shy away from requesting from the dear God that they will receive all desired spiritual happiness.

I express most politely my thanks for being remembered. Since my Indians have not yet learned anything so far except to weave some little baskets, I do not want to give the Honorable Aunt such a basket for her generous gifts since Her Honor would be better served with the skins of some lions and tigers, if I could offer some. I really have a soft chair for guests, of whom I welcome enough in this mission, who transform me into a host, without paying for it. They serve me, in place of the noble guests [?], extraordinarily well.

The paper runs out, and the messenger is already sitting on the horse who will deliver, in my place, if God pleases so, this short letter. I recommend myself to the gracious and motherly favors, to the best experienced brotherly inclination, with the request to great God that He may protect all most graciously and blissfully and then, after a long life, will accept them in the eternal peace.

Tecoripa 1. July. 1736 Philippus Segesser S.J.
Letter 55

Letter to his mother Anna Maria Catharina Segesser, nee Rusconi, and to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa, July 31, 1737

Highly Born Honorable Mother etc. and Highly Born Juncker Brother, etc.,

I do not doubt that both my Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother will forgive me for not writing, as it would be dutiful, separate letters to each of you. However, it is not possible because the lack of time and the many businesses do not give me a moment for a pause. There are so many sick people and so many funerals everywhere that one could think that God has sent such a terrifying plague in order to give a lesson to the world. The children often die because of chicken pox (?), throwing up much blood. There is no one who could help them by means of blood-letting or other means.

Since I know that the Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother will certainly have pity with me, you will not object to the fact that I am addressing the present letter to both of you, sending you the news that, God be praised, I am well and healthy. Last month of May I have received the two bigger boxes. But the one that had been delivered to me through the hands of the Procurator, and so also the smaller one, containing the sickle and the scythes, had been opened. Nothing was missing but the little disks with the images of saints (?), the rosaries, and the benedictions of Saint Paul. Almost everything has been ground to powder because the objects out of iron had not been packed well. Many of the scapulars and almost all of the images have faded almost to invisibility. From this you can see what will happen here when the NN will use such foreign objects. The moulds for ginger-bread made out of terracotta have also arrived broken, but that is the least worrisome damage.

As to the seeds, I do not know whether they will sprout after such a long time. They have arrived a little rotten, but I have not been able to check them because of the great disturbances. And since my gardener has also fled, as you can learn from the long letter, much has fallen apart. Otherwise, the most important and valuable objects have arrived here well. The oblong box, which contained the larger shotgun, and that has been shipped via Lord Philipps de Anza—I am writing his name that way deliberately—and via his brother, the Honorable Captain, and arrived just the moment when that the Honorable Captain was in my house, was totally untouched and in good conditions with all the seals that had been attached to it in his house, as if I had received it only recently in Lucerne. Only the objects out of iron wrapped in leather were affected a little by rust. By contrast, the crow-bars that had been wrapped, have reached me without any damage. The abgesicht [perhaps the sight?] of the larger rifle has fallen off because it had not been attached to the barrel like it should have been. Instead it had only been soldered on to it. Here it can hardly be reattached.
Otherwise, as I have said, everything else has arrived here in a good condition. Although I should not cause you any more expenditure, and am not really allowed to ask for more, I am saying nevertheless: it would be a great generosity and expression of love by the friends if they were to send me something in a few years, if God prolongs our life [long enough].

In that case, do not use any other channel to send me anything but the one through the above mentioned lord in Cadiz because he equips his own ship to travel with the fleet, [Neg. 51996] and so it will cost me very little except for what it costs to ship it from home [in Lucerne] to Cadiz. Since this lord must send goods to his brother, the Captain, such small items can easily come along. I will soon send via this channel some small souvenirs because our own mules [that belong to the Jesuit Order] travel from Mexico to the fortress and back.

One thing was not included in the boxes sent to me: the Juncker Brother has not written how much it all has cost so that I could meet my obligations [i.e., pay for those items]. Everything will be of great use soon because I have requested a pastor for the present mission to whom I could hand over this one which is a better equipped mission, then move myself about thirty miles away to establish there a new mission. I do not know how to thank the Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother for all their good deeds. In the meantime I can only say: may God recompense you for it all thousand times both here and beyond in Heaven.

Would the Juncker Brother be so kind to send this rambling letter, not well elaborated and apparently only superficial because it had to be written in haste, together with the next one to the Honorable Junker Canon of the cathedral, together with his own letter because he had written to me asking for it. And if you would like to communicate this letter to the community of the fathers of the Society, you should first read it over yourself and add missing words or syllables, since I had to write quickly while demands are imposed on me coming from thousand directions. I am writing about my practical experience; very easily one thought follows the other, and the quill sometimes moves faster than the thoughts and ignores what would have to be set down what I want to say. You will easily grasp it and can cast it into a better shape without any trouble. The Juncker Brother can believe me, I do not read the letter over [for corrections] even once because I do not have the time, as one can see from that what I have written here.

I am sending this letter via the hand of the lord of Cadiz and hope that it will reach you safely. The precious stones that the Indians hang at their noses, about which the Juncker Brother had inquired are little rings out of glass, and out of which the rosaries are made. It might be that they [the Indians] had had available better [material] some time ago. In the [next] long letter I will report in greater detail.

That what I wrote about three months ago, the Juncker Brother will probably understand. I very much hope that it can be realized. If the Juncker Brother might send me something by chance, perhaps he could add to it as padding one or two balls of string to catch the quails with. But it is not necessary to mention that specifically [keep it quiet?], and a piece of a fishing net would do as well, pardon me [for my demands?].

I should write to all siblings, but I do not have the time. This lengthy letter must be good enough for all of them. I thank you all for your good deeds and for keeping me in mind. I am sending thousand greetings to all who can think of me. Especially I am wishing my dear Honorable Mother and my Juncker Brother long-lasting health and calm years. I recommend myself thousand-fold to your highly graceful favors in a filial and brotherly fashion, especially to all of your holy prayers on my behalf because I need it very much.
From Tecoripa, July 31, 1737.

To my Highly Honorable Mother and the Juncker Brother, your most loyal son and brother, Philipp Segesser, SJ

P.S.: My special greetings to the beloved lady and my Jost Henrich who probably can copy the longer letter. I greet him especially. Do not forget [to send my greetings to] Francisca. Lady Baumwart has hopefully traveled into Heaven.
Letter 56

Letter to his uncle Jost Ranutius Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa, Juli 31, 1737 (Neg. 52003)

Neg. ASM 52003
PA 437/588
[No. 15]
Latin

Highly Revered Honorable Uncle, Canon Inspector and Secret Master [Calme]

God knows how much comfort, and how much motivation for serving zealously in the colonial missions those three gracious letters, written down by the hand of your fatherly grace and full of matters so worthy in their relevance, have brought to me! Accordingly, all the way up to this hour, in which all three have been handed over to me in justice, I have hoped to know nothing more than that fortunate standard of health, and of living, which your fatherly care has deemed worthy to share with me in your letters. May God protect your fatherly care three times for His own greater glory, and the greatest and so necessary comfort of all of us, as the true father of our entire very devoted and obliged family, which I recognize, value, and love very much. For each good deed I have precious gifts, which the generous hand of your fatherly care has sent across the ocean to me, which in these places, just as in the whole world, are valued at a very high rate. God will repay your fatherly care with his infinite blessing.

I am not able to give anything in return for such great gifts, and for such surpassing good deeds, other than with my labors, which will scarcely permit some time for many words, as he is able to see in the attached letters, which I promised so often, and I decided to send to Your Lordship; not so that they may be marked, because they are not worthy of such great expenses, but only so that Your fatherly care may read them among those family walls, and so that he may repair the errors with his prudent patience; because the work is flawed, rash, because I was not able to reread it on account of a dearth of time. Nonetheless, it will be easy, when sense is lacking, to guess what I want to express with the attached letters or necessary words. If so excessive business matters had not stolen away my time, I would have precisely arranged it, and I would have transposed it into a better form. May Your Fatherly Care forgive the annoyance; a few days ago I sent other letters, wherefore I am concluding and ending these letters now, since I know that Your Fatherly Care is very busy with very many business matters.

The only thing which I ask is that Your Lordship may hold me very close in his paternal support and in the sacrifices at the masses so that God may deem it worthy to increase His entirely indispensable patience for me in those regions, which I hope to obtain with the support of Your Lordship at God’s side.

Tecoripa, July 31, 1737.
The Revered Highly Esteemed Honorable Canon and Father’s unworthy grandson and disreputable servant of Christ Philipp Segesser S.J.

I send a very strong wish for good health to the two Canons DD. Sognatis, just as to my Revered Master Brother [etc.]
Letter 57

Letter to his mother Anna Maria Catharina Segesser, née Rusconi and to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Borja de Tecoripa, June 15, 1738 (Neg. 51997-52000)

Neg. ASM 51997
PA 437/588
[No. 8]

Highly Honorable Mother and Juncker Brother,

What might be the reason that I have not received even one letter together with the merchants who arrived here this year? In the previous years I have not experienced that. I am afraid that certain things might have changed, so I am particularly anxious to hear news. A year ago around this time I composed that long letter with great care that was delivered to the Juncker Brother in the beloved home town, and from there to the Honorable Secretary of the cathedral. Until now, however, I have not received any news from Mexico [i.e., from the south of his mission], perhaps because of the great unrest and fear that the horrible plague has created down there and which has been, as we have learned, somewhat contained by now. Nevertheless, it still rages and is said to have taken with it more than 10,000 souls, most of them Indians. That sickness has now started to rage among the Spaniards as well, as they say. This evil is such a poisonous and infectious matter that there, where it has begun in a household, not one person has been spared. It does not take anything else but to touch a sick person’s stuff, and one is also infected by the sickness. There are many in our Society who have died from this plague while attending the ill, and likewise some in the other religious organizations. So it might be that the above mentioned letter had been neglected/ignored, or had been kept behind on the ships due to the quarantine.

On our side we fear that the black death might reach us as well since we observe that it quickly arrives in place after place, town after town, although we have no reason to fear that it might extend up to here insofar as the chicken-pox (?), as they call it, has already hit so hard that almost all villages are empty, especially those where the people went to that Hellish assembly of which I have reported the last year.

It has been observed that those few who have remained calm [have not joined the riots] and have been affected by this chicken pox, have not died of it; only those who have left the village, and hardly any of those have survived. Among the dead have been some of my altar boys, especially the above mentioned Nicholas / : Nicolaus who has died, which has meant a great loss for me in all the business [of the mission]. Until I will have trained another one according to my needs, it will take [hard] work. At the present I use a Philip who knows quite well how to serve the priest at the altar.

This year we have experienced great suffering from all sides because in part the Indians had been rebellious, and partly very much because of the drought [dryness of the earth]. All the fruit on the field have dried up, along with those in my garden, which has caused me great worries [not
knowing] how to find the necessary [food] for my Indians. The very same have, because they have little to eat, left the village and moved into the mountains to search for fruit and roots there. If their superiors oppose them, the latter are in danger of losing their life, as has happened last week. For instance, in another village or among another people, called Cumurípa, [Neg. 51998] they have killed the most noble superior, whom I had admired much, with four arrows. He died before I could rush there and before he could confess and receive the last rites.

I have received two letters from my Pastor Provincial, the one from my most beloved Honorable Pastor Ruldoph Burckhardt, written in Trento on October 4, 1736, who informed me about a small chest that Pastor Andreas Strobl had been supposed to ship to me. But I have not received any news from the above mentioned Pastor Andreas, nor from the little chest (in which all the requested books about the history of our province had been contained, which I had requested, and as I could learn from another letter by my Honorable Mother and from the one by the Pastor Matthias Stöttlinger that had been included). Although I have not heard anything of the chest, I have received some comfort from the letter that the Honorable Mother had sent to a pastor (I do not know to whom, it might have been the Pastor Andreas because he sent me such a letter). I could learn from it that the Honorable Mother at that time, in the month of September of the above mentioned year 1736, together with all the other beloved friends, whom I am greeting in the name of the Lord from the bottom of my heart, was in good health. May God grant that the present letter may reach them all according to my wish.

I am, as it pleases God, like the month of April, the good is mixed with the bad, and the bad is mixed with the good. I have enough strength, however, to carry out my duties, though not without considerable fear that the Indians one day will liberate me from the evil [of this life, will kill me] because I have enemies around me in this area, particularly because they see that the glory of God must be promoted here.

A short time ago when I went to another mission for some business to reprimand the local Pastor there—sapienti pauca [Latin: a few words for the wise one!]—my Indians organized once again, as last year, and which I had mentioned, the same kind of Hellish assembly in another village or tribe. Since the local authority, that is the judge, did not want to suppress it, although it would have been his duty [to do so], perhaps because one of his servants was among the organizers, I had to report the whole affair to the senior Captain in order to avoid that great calamity might evolve from it like last year. Thus I caused the above mentioned judge and the Indians to hate me, which bothered me very little because the Catholic faith and the honor of God demanded [such action]. [Neg. 51999]

The soldiers and their captain must take care of this matter on a daily basis, which is not surprising because if the Indians, and so also the Spaniards, do not realized the seriousness of our attitude, they will not be peaceful. They only fear the fire arms, and since they see that the missionary pastors treat them kindly all the time, only the good accepts the good willingly, whereas the evil fears nothing but the pain [of punishment], a fact that can be observed in the entire world.

In the last letter I have provided a full account of how the shipped little chest had arrived and in what condition. In this letter I want to repeat that although some missionary pastors go on the journey [travel here], please do not burden them with more than instructional letters that have no great significance [they are not trustworthy]. And those among our ranks who are staying in Genoa and Cadiz should be charged with them even less because although they make extensive efforts to transport those to Mexico, there the packages face the greatest danger, either that they get lost, or might be opened so that the best items will be destroyed or become invisible [are stolen]. This is
especially the case when the love and generosity of my dear friends reminds them [prods them] to send me some items that are most welcome in this country, such as the disks for the holy offering and similar things. They should mail them without any further worries or concerns to Cadiz to the above mentioned Lord Don Philippe de Anssa who will safely deliver the package out of love for his lord brother, although it might cost a little more to ship it that way. It is better to receive all these things safely and completely by paying more for their delivery than to lose them altogether or to receive them in damaged shape when you pay less.

Insofar as the boxes, in which the seeds had been shipped, have spent three to four years on the journey, they were all found to be rotten. Not more than three shrubs grew out of the flax seed. Nothing grew out of the other seeds. I am particularly sad about the hemp seed, and if in a short time new seed could be sent via the same channel when the Spanish fleet departs from Cadiz, I would greatly appreciate it because it would be of great use for this country.

This letter I am sending via Pastor Anthonius Balthasar who is now dean in a college in Mexico and who has sent me the Saintly Life of Nicholas, [Neg. 52000] newly printed in Lucerne, and, as far as I can tell at this point, well written. I hope that he will take care to deliver this short letter safely. I do not have more time to write, recommend myself to all great favors and mercy, especially to my dear Honorable Mother and Juncker Brother, whom God may mercifully keep in good health and well-being. I plead with them never to forget me so that God grant me His grace to live for my profession in these arduous labors and to die according to His divine will. From Tecoripa, June 15, 1738.

To my Highly Honorable Mother and Juncker Brother, most obedient son and most loyal brother, Philipp Segesser S.J.
Letter 58

Letter to his brother Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco Broja de Tecoripa. August 13th, 1741 (Neg. 52001-52002)

Neg. ASM 52001  
PA 437/588  
[No. 13]

Highly Honorable Juncker Brother

This letter serves for nothing else, than to give my dearest friends news about the following. I have not received a letter for more than the last two years, possibly on the account of the war, which arose between Spain and England. For the same reason we are experiencing an increase of prices for all things in this land, and one cannot find a single sheet of paper, on which to write. I am presently writing this, because it is [just] necessary, and taking notes of other things, on pages taken from a book, which I had bought a few years ago and which has to serve me [for this purpose]. I am very curious to know, how my dear Honorable Mother, the siblings, Mr. Secretari, and other friends are doing. In what type of office or position does my Juncker brother find himself? Who will succeed the deceased Emperor to the throne? What are the conditions of the praiseworthy Swiss Confederation? What Fathers rule and live in our province, and who has died? Where does our Father Burchart reside in the above mentioned province? Which Father Mayr travelled to Rome? Father Joseph or Farther Antoni Mayr? Instead of from Father Hallaur, I have received a letter from the Rector Father Aman, and I have also sent him an answer to Munich.

Let me tell you news of how we in this land, and particularly I, have experienced a tremendous amount of astonishing things. In one of my letters I have written, how those Indians named the Pimas bachas [sic] had all at the same time, at three different locations, revolted against the Catholic beliefs, and caused me an indescribable amount of work to bring everything back into order. I had realized, with God’s help, how to achieve a happy outcome, and burnt their false God in my atrium in the presence of all the people, Spaniards and Indians. A short time later, the Hellish enemy [the devil] cause a similar destruction when he unleashed an enormous thunderstorm that destroyed all the houses, because they were built from clay, especially my own and my church. This required me to take residence under the serene sky under a straw hut as my living quarter until I built a new and improved one.

The rivers everywhere have carried almost all of the good soil away from the fields, leaving nothing but stones and sand behind. At this occasion a sorcerer spread rumors amongst the Indians, telling them that the world was coming to an end and that only a few of them would be spared who would move to a specific place (this was in one of my villages) and comply with what he would order them to do. Upon this command, the people left the villages and threw themselves at the greatest risk for their lives into the torrential rivers in order to get to the other [specified] location. He had bewitched them with his magic art, so they believed him. This happened especially because he had pushed a stake into the ground and ordered one of them to pull it out. As he did that, water fountain, an arm tick, shot out of the ground, and this he performed often. I pursued the evil creature,
but since he had received news from me, had taken to escape, and has not been until today still although I had thereupon brought back the people.

Barely had this event ended, a much more dangerous fire arose around the eastern side, which placed the entire Province in the greatest danger. About two years ago, ten or twelve Indians named Jacquis (Yaquis) had traveled to Mexico [Neg. 52002] in order to take care of some grievances with the Viceroy, and at the same time to promise to pay tribute to the king, which secured them some freedom. These were things that do not appear to bear any malice. The outcome taught us much the opposite, and made us realize how clever the Indians are. The most distinguished Indian among that group left behind an order, telling them all that if he were not return from Mexico within two years they should rebel against the Spanish and the Father missionaries, etc. They followed that order much earlier. And although the above mentioned Indians were already on their way back, the whole country was filled with animosity. These people are uncountable, and are my neighbors. The have, quietly, seduced and entangled my Indians to assist them, and then realized all their evil intentions. However, after I had quickly received some Spaniards and soldiers from the fortress, they met with courageous resistance.

Although more than 2000 Indians attacked, filled with fury, we drove them into flight. They lost many of theirs, whereas we lost only one on our side, although we had not been more than 30 persons who made up the resistance. I write at this opportunity with brevity, because he, who is carrying this letter to Mexico, is already sitting on his horse. I would like to assure them, in case they got news that the Indians had killed me, that I am doing well. Many rumors have spread throughout the country that [it would be time to] recommend the well-being of my [spirit] to God. Even though some Fathers have died during this uprising due to the inconvenience and evil approaches by the Indians, all of them have escaped, except for one, whom I took into my house. I have resisted [the Indians] by means of writing letters [for help] and active fighting. The Spaniards have gloriously conquered [the enemies], although the punishment of the leaders of the resistance took for ever. Although I have bodyguards, I am not safe for any hour from the danger that they [Indians] might come storming forth once again. I hope with the help of God that everything will get better. And I will write about all of the circumstance [later in greater detail], because some strange events have occurred and continue to happen. etc. etc. I implore you all to recommend me and everything to God.

Moreover, in this year, the Apaches have murdered my best friend, Lord Captain Don Juan Baptista de Ansa, which I regret very much. As a result of the great trouble of the above mentioned war and revolt by the Yaquis, the Father Antoni Martini, who was the Visitor of these Yaquis, died. He had studied with me in Ingolstadt and was from Trento. Please send news to our Fathers in the College; I have to cut short. My friendly greetings to all, and so to the dear youth. etc.

Tecoripa, August 13, 1741

My Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother
Philip Segesser S.J.

perdon, si ai foltas, no puedo volver á leer [Spanish: I am sorry, if there are mistakes, I cannot return to read]
Letter 59

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Francisco de Tecoripa, June, 27, 1742 (Neg. 52004-52008) (contemporary copy by another hand)

Neg. ASM 52004
PA 437/588
[No. 17]

Highly Honorable Juncker Brother etc.

The continuing hostility between Spain and England have completely deprived me of the desired news from my beloved friends, acquaintances, and fatherland for more than for two years, so I have not received a single letter from Europe, therefore I do not know whether my beloved Honorable Mother or other friends have passed away and enjoy the eternal peace (as I hope so). I don’t doubt that my Juncker Brother has sent me the requested news, the letter however, has been lost, just the same as mine because they have not arrived yet. May God grant that these short lines will arrive, which I have entrusted to Father Johannes Antonius so that (the letters) from the Fathers Fathers Procuratores, that are shipped to Rome, will arrive more securely.

I wish from my heart that all beloved relatives are in best health, to whom my most beloved Juncker Brother should extent my friendly greetings as the opportunity and circumstances arise. In these two years, I have suffered from great troubles and it appears that they will in fact double. After a new deluge had covered all my villages, indeed the whole (area), with rocks and sand, had washed away the houses, which were made out of dirt, of which I believe I have already reported, a great famine and epidemic stormed in, which delivered many to the other world [they died], which persists until today. In addition to this, the Indians called Yaquis203 have taken up weapons and created a general rebellion together with my parish children (who have already, for the third time, displayed resistance against me since the time that I have lived with them), called Pima. This was even more dangerous because there were more enemies than friends. I would have much to write, if I did not lack the time; maybe at another opportunity I might go into more details.

Two times the above-mentioned Indians have attacked us in a [most] hostile manner here in Tercoripa (after they had totally devastated the four villages that are under my care, robbed the church, destroyed the altar, and broke the holy pictures into pieces, completely devoured cattle and horses, and all grain. But because of my precautions they [Neg. 52005] met opposition both times and then fled, having lost some of their own (people), have escaped. If the Superiors, both the worldly and my own [Jesuits], would have believed me from the beginning, when I told them these news, then I would not have suffered such great losses. After a while, more than 200 Spanish soldiers had assembled, but at the time of the advancement of the enemies, not more than 40 were present, who were confronted by more than 2000 Indians, whom they, as already mentioned, finally vanquished.

The Yaquis had thought that it would work out in Tecoripa as successfully as in their own area, where they appropriated everything like a burning fire, hacked the Spaniards in the presence
of their wives into pieces, then took the latter with them, completely naked, as slaves for their sexual
lust. In one incident, they unexpectedly attacked 30 soldiers, robbed them of their clothing, weapons,
and food, tied them to trees, whipped them with sticks so badly that they were near death, telling
them to inform their captain that the same would happen to him, etc. In fact, that could have
happened if they had not met opposition.

It would also have happened to me if I, as the Father Missionary of the mentioned provinces
Yaquis and Mago, would have left my mission and would have fled. The goal of the mentioned
Indians had been to kill all Spaniards, so that they could live in their old ways again. In a surprise
attack they captured the Fathers, though they did not kill them. But they kept them so badly that two
of them died because of the suffering and their old age. At the end they [the Indians] decided to kill
them all. They had great desire to capture me and to take me away with them so that I could teach
them how to build [military] resistance because, as they believed, and said, I had displayed the
mind-set of a military man. What fools! They do not know how to discriminate between being
careful and being blood-thirsty, which cannot find any room in me. But it could easily have
happened [that I would have been captured] if not a stranger Indian [from another tribe], whom they
had captured, who was one of my own Indians, [Neg. 52007] had escaped from them and told me
so, which allowed me to make the necessary preparations. However, later my own Indians even were
the most eager [in the fighting] insofar as those young men whom I had raised [fed] in the house as
orphans shot from the church tower with arrows on to the commander and the soldiers.

If I had not gotten up so early in the morning, the Spaniards would not have risen from their
beds because not even the body-guard had noticed the enemy, until I gave alarm, since the enemy
had already entered through the house door and shot down one of my most favorite [altar] boys with
an arrow right through the body. Upon that the Spaniards defended themselves courageously in their
pajamas, without shoes and stockings, and gained the victory, although those who had been
wounded later gave me enough to do, and I then became a servant for them all. Up to seven months
18 to 22 adult guests have eaten at my table at noon and in the evening. 50 other people [soldiers]
lived from my kitchen und free of charge for 5 months (until the order came from Mexico that they
had to pay for their own meals).

The soldiers, who are all Spaniards, along with those soldiers mentioned above from the
remaining missions of the Jesuits, provide the bread that consists half of wheat and half of corn
[maize]. The meat I delivered for nothing but light and fire, as the saying goes. They consumed
more the large animals than the small ones. Altogether, this rebellious group cost me more than
3,000 Spanish thaler, to estimate most moderately. But other missions did not suffer little either.
Until today not everything has become quiet, and I do not know when my Indians will know how
to make a living other than through this deceptive strategy. He who seems to be the best is the most
dangerous.

I have requested to be given another mission so that I can rest for some time. But it seems
as if the Superiors want to double my work. Furthermore, the entire land is in a bad shape,
everything is so poor, everywhere there are enemies, especially so-called Apasches / apaches /,
who cause great damage. A few days ago they would have [Neg. 52008] captured or killed the
Father Casparus Stiger, if the Indians, whom he had brought with him as a defense team, had not
helped him to escape, etc. etc.

On the basis of the news that have reached us so far it seems that the situation in Europe must
be very bloody, and there will be much war in the countries of the Roman crown [German Empire]:
the Juncker Brother reports about that and all the other things which he is so kind to let me know
about. In the month of March we saw a huge comet on the side of the sunrise early in the morning, which by and by approached the north star and there then disappeared. Last year we saw another one at sunset, but it was not at all as big as the last one. The black death has taken many people from this earth, which has caused the Missionary Fathers much work. We have also heard bad news from the Oriental India; I do not doubt that those [news] are better known in our fatherland than here. I actually received a letter from my superior, ordering me to move immediately to Ures, a mission that is two days travel away from here, and to take care of it until the actual Father Missionarius (the best friend whom I can have and who is very miserable because of false accusations, etc.) will return from where he had been called to. I do not doubt that the Pater general will have to get involved personally, because we live in such comforting lands. I would have much to write but there is no time for it. I recommend myself to the most pleasantly experienced favors by my Juncker Brother and the most loved siblings, friends, and especially my most beloved Honorable Mother, if she is still alive. I beg God that He may keep everyone in good health, happiness, and consolation for many years. For now written in Tecoripa, although soon I will be situated somewhere else, as I hope, within a month.

June 27, 1742.
My Highly Born Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother
Philippus Segeßer Jhs. [Societas Jesu]
Letter 60

Letter to his Brother Ulrich Fanz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, May 18, 1744 (Neg. 51973-51976)

Neg. ASM 51973
PA 437/589 (the items in this file are numbered, though the copies are left out in that counting system. Here I follow the pencil marks, in contrast to the approach for file 588 because it is a more thorough system)
No. 1

Highly Born Juncker Brother, etc.

More than two years have passed in which I have not received one single letter from my beloved fatherland. Hence I do not know how my beloved and closest friends are doing. I recognize well that such silence and absence of so much desired news have been caused by the hostilities between the Spanish and the English crown. May God grant all those princes and worldly powers the desired peace. Although I have trustworthy information that the mentioned armed struggles continue until now, I did not want to neglect to use a good opportunity to send this short letter. Perhaps it might have the god luck to reach its destination, where my other sent mail, due to shipwreck, did not arrive. I wish from my heart that the Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, the Mademoiselles Sisters, the Honorable Nephews at the Cathedrals [canons], and all other close friends, whom I am greeting from my heart, enjoy the best health.

As to me, the all gracious God has been so generous with me to preserve my necessary strength which is necessary for the indescribable work that has to be carried out daily and on a continuous basis. Saying this, I mean that I have not yet succumbed neither to heat nor to cold, God be thanked eternally. I attribute this to the eager and steady prayer of my beloved friends. I do not doubt that some of my letters that I have sent two or three years ago must have arrived, in which I informed the Juncker Brother about my work and great dangers for my life. Hence in this letter I will only write, because of a lack of time, what has happened this year until now. I let you know that the unfathomable God has ordered my best acquaintance in this last corner of the world to Him. Perhaps I have already told the Juncker Brother his name in other letters, that is, Father Aloysius Maria Marciani who, during his whole Apostolic work, has held the office of a Superior.

He was much inclined toward me although he had been born in Italy and did not know me from before [the mission in America]. He entrusted me with all his spiritual and worldly concerns (although I had not been his closest neighbor, instead I lived thirty miles away from him), and called me, instead of all others at the time of his hard and painful dying, caused by a gall stone, as big as a hazel nut, which I have now in my property. He called me so that I could assist him at his passing away, which I also did with inexpressible emotional suffering, though not without some comfort that, despite my little worth, God wanted me to apply my service.209

This very great affection for me created the same sentiment among my fellow workers [missionaries] what the fatherly love created between the Egyptian Joseph and his brothers
[jealousy]. But likewise as their malice did not achieve anything against Joseph, so God has, as I believe, arranged the matter miraculously. Even if they could have expelled me, the one who was supposed to select the successor to the mission of the deceased one, and this least according to the best opinion of most and according to the habits of this country, [Neg. 51974] he utilized the power vested in him and called upon me a short time later and entrusted me, against all hope, that mission, although I would have been quite content with my previous mission Tecorípa. Even the Indians will be sad seeing me leave, as they really expressed today, when they arrived here to take me back home and I was still writing this [letter]. But I do not believe that the now ruling Superiors will approve [this appointment], considering that my strength is slowly waning and the mentioned mission comprises more than hundred miles in extension.

I myself went through hardest time, suffering from the rebellious Indians during my stay of nine years there, as I have reported in greater detail in the previous letter. The present mission, however, is more comfortable. In case if I could not travel with a horse or a mule, which might happen, I could use a calash. In other words, despite being sick or old I would be able to carry out better my duty. The Father Visitator General of this mission, Father Joan Antonius Balthasar, decided on this move [to assign him that mission], though not at the beginning, but later, drawing from his authority, and after he had received more information about me, and then did not neglect his obligation [toward me]. I say: more information about me, that is, not information that I provided him with, but what others told him.

I observed only from the distance and hoped that God would arrange everything according to His will, as it truly seems to be the case. I expect in about one month the mentioned Father Visitator Rector General Antonius Balthasar, for a visit. He will stay with me during the water month (that is the name for the weather [monsoon] or summer time during which it is very cumbersome to travel). This will give me not little comfort. He writes to me quite often and talks about his trips, the most dangerous ones because of the enemies and the crossing of the sea to Baja California he has already done, and soon he will enter into better lands [Heavens?]. A few months ago I went to meet him on his trip to me, and we have already discussed various things for a considerable time, etc. A few days ago I got the news from Mexico that Don Phelipe de Ansa died in Cadiz, who had been supposed to send me the chest, but then did not do it because he wanted to await the end of the war with the British. So, I do not know how things will develop from here; nevertheless I will make an effort inquire about that matter, and I hope, Saint Anthony willing, not everything has been lost. I will write to a Lord in Cadiz who, as it is said, holds all the property left behind by the Lord Joan Phelipe de Ansa, and he is just the one, whom I entrust the present letter. His name is: Al Cap.n D.n Thomas Ruiz de Apodaca, Gn.e Dios m.s a fe[?] = Cadiz., or, what is better [Latin], per s. Cadis.

I am giving you that information because perhaps when this Lord writes to the Honorable Juncker Brother, you will be able to respond and recommend to him my letter. After all, it is safer to send the letters and objects through such hands. Did the Juncker Brother see the two large comets, [Neg. 51975] the one toward the sun set in the evening, the other toward the sun rise in the morning in the month of March? What do people say what they mean? When have they seen such a lunar eclipse like that one that completely darkened the night of All Souls more than three hours. We observed it here not knowing the beginning or the end of it.

What I am reading in the Spanish newspapers tells me that the war in Germany continues and is very intensive. Poor Bavaria! How miserable it must feel! How much the members of our College must suffer! In Mexico something extraordinary happened this year in the College, or Profession
House, with the Father Praeposito and the Brother Gatekeeper, Father Nicolaus Segura, who is the very person who had to transport me and my companions from Spain to Mexico. They found him in his bed early in the morning of March 8th, dead, with 50 different stab wounds. He was the Confessor of the Viceroy. On March 12th they found Brother Joan Ramos, dead in his guardian room, with a rope around his neck, attached to the bed, and also cut apart with many wounds, without that it has been possible to find out who caused this evil [murder]. One brother of the mentioned College is in the prison, but we do not know anything certain so far.

We live in such countries, why should one therefore wonder if the Indians take our lives? Different suspicions regarding the mentioned murder have arisen, and some say that two vermastragte [?] had hid in the College, or Profession House, as a little boy allegedly revealed. Nothing certain is known. The hostile Indians have recently set fire to a house of a farm, not far from my house, and those who came crawling out they murdered with lances and arrows. The others burned in the house. The Apache is an evil neighbor. If the war between Spain and England should come to an end, which God may bring about, and if the Juncker Brother might find a good opportunity, could he send me every kind of seeds that he might get, especially fresh hemp seed. I have enough rape seed, and so also diverse seeds for lettuce—chicory seed I do not have, nor sugar beet, and different seeds for flowers do not exist here either, etc. etc. Leek, celery, chives, marjoram, also *carifol, coliflor* [cauliflower], I can no longer remember, how it is called in German, and I would like to have its seed. The seeds of the latter I also would like to have, etc. etc. When the Juncker Brother writes to, use the following label:

Al M. R. P.e Phelipe [sic] Segesser,
de la Comp.a de Jhs Min.o Doct.ro
por su Mag.d en la Prov.a de Sonora
en su Partido de los Sc[?] Ures en America. [Neg. 51976]

To all the acquaintances in the the *Patribus Societatis*, and also to all others who still remember me. I would like to ask the Juncker Brother to extend my friendly greetings especially to my beloved Nephews who must certainly have graduated from the *gymnasium*. If the Juncker Brother could send me the instrument with which the barbers do the blood letting, I would greatly appreciate it. I know how to handle that once it has been applied, but not the *lanzeten* [?], etc., which is no longer used.

à Dios mi am.mo S.r Hermano [Spanish: Honorable Brother, be greeted in God]. I recommend myself to all holy prayers and remain, in Ures May 18, 1744,

my Highly Born Juncker Brother’s
most loyal brother,
Phelip Segesser S.J.
Letter 61

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ulres. 17th of December 1745 (Neg. 51931)

Neg. ASM 51931
PA 437/589
No. 2

Highly born Juncker Brother,

I have not received even one letter for three years and therefore do not know how my beloved friends are doing, and how, in such grievous times the situation is in my fatherland. I am very anxious to receive concrete news. In the newspaper that have been published up to March of this year, I have learned of the death of the Emperor Charles VII as well as of the peace established between Vienna [Austria] and Bavaria, etc. God willing, there will be peace everywhere. As to the Englishmen, they inflict great harm to us, by blocking the trade, which means, not only is everything here so expensive, but it is also difficult to come by so that most walk around without proper clothing and only wear unfamiliar textiles from this country.

It has been about a year since Peter Joannes Antonius Balthasar had been to my home, giving me great comfort, since he was sent as a Visitor Generalis. I think he will write a little more [about that] I do not have time time because the new [Visitator] who is traveling through here does not grant me more time. I send greetings from my heart to my Honorable Mother, the Juncker Brother, the beloved Honorable Sister-in-law, my nephew, and my most beloved Mademoiselles sisters and all relatives and acquaintances and wish them all good health, just as I am in a good shape. May they all recommend me to the dear God, as I am eagerly doing so [for them]. The chest that had been deposited in Cadiz in the trust of Honorable Filip Anza, of whom I had heard that he had died, has not yet arrived here until today. May God grant that it has not yet been shipped because the sea is unsafe due to the enemies and those who are not enemies etc. At another occasion I will write more extensively. In the meantime I recommend myself to the highly esteemed favors of my Juncker Brother, whom the most beloved God may keep in good health and happiness for many years to come, etc.

Ures, December 17, 1745.

Most Loyal Brother, yours ever ready to serve,
Philip Segesser Jhs.
Letter 62

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San José de los Pimas. 17th July 1746 (Neg. 51967-51968)

Highly Born Juncker Brother,

I have received with particular comfort in the month of April of this year the loving letter from the first of the mes [Spanish; corrected in German: Monats = month] of May\textsuperscript{216} from the last year. I have learned from it about the good health of our family members, and especially of my most beloved Honorable Mother. May God grant such steadiness to everyone individually according to His divine will for many years to come. In particular I beg God to relieve our Highly Honorable Father, the Canon and Keeper of the cathedral from the terrible sickness and keep him healthy. Would the Juncker Brother extend my greetings to all and everyone, asking them to recommend me to the dear God, what I also do [for them], although I cannot always think of them [literally: they are coldly scattered in my thoughts] because of incredibly many businesses that are imposed on me. All those letters that I have to write every day, seem to be an impossible task.

I can say frankly that I am not allowed from early in the morning until late at night to drop the quill. You can figure this out from this paper [?] how many letters I have to write to people all over my mission and send them everywhere my orders. And since here we are not far away from the new government, those courtiers [government officials] and military commanders keep me more than busy. Three reams\textsuperscript{217} of paper are not enough\textsuperscript{218} in one year, although I use it for nothing else but to write important letters. At times I do not know where my head is [my head is swirling], and the fingers get tired. May God be praised, for a long time I have not suffered from any sickness, except for some headaches, which is caused by all that writing.\textsuperscript{219}

The Father Balthasar and other Superiors have been surprised, when they were in my house [back home in Lucerne] that I might write more than them. A while ago I wrote another letter to my Juncker Brother, and I hope that it has reached you. In that letter he would have learned that the chest that had been delivered to the late Lord Ansa in Cadiz has not yet arrived here. May God prevent it that it might have fallen into the hands of thieves, which would be very painful.

Just as the Juncker Brother reports about their experiences in our dear fatherland, so we experience it here everyday: inflation. Nowadays, while I am writing this letter, I pay for two reams of white paper with thirty-one Spanish thaler and two bieslein. I can guarantee you that [Neg. 51968] this is a very special price as a favor to me. An ellen\textsuperscript{220} of white cloth cannot even bought with two Spanish thalers. A pound of pepper at least 20 thalers. A pound of little nails at least 60 thaler. A pound of cinnamon costs at least 60 thalers. Moreover, my house is an open restaurant, that...
is, an inn where everyone comes and stays, and eats for free. I must say that I found myself alone only very few days.

Then I have to supply [the travelers] with food to take with them so they have something to eat on the road because they do not find anything to eat in many places and in the Indian villages because the Indians generally feed on wild fruit, deer and forest animals (they do not share with the Spaniards, though they do with me), such as does, deer, boars, and rabbits. And they eat up everything they have on one day because they do not care about tomorrow.

Now is the season for the fruit called bitaia [dragon fruit], of which I wrote before, and which I enjoy very much. I wished that my Honorable Sisters could taste them! etc. Could the Juncker Brother inquire with those merchants who shipped the mentioned box to Cadiz and inquire what has happened with it? I do not doubt that my so careful dear fellow citizens will be highly respectful considering the great damage that the neighboring countries have suffered in the extremely long and painful war. They will realize that it is neither a good idea nor advisable to intervene in foreign affairs, and they will certainly desire peace and tranquility. In light of all that they would have taken good care of entrusted property. It gives me great comfort and is my primary concern when the newspapers arrive here to read what they report about my dear fatherland. Oh, what great damage must my most beloved province of Bavaria have suffered! May God grant that our king establishes peace with the English because we suffer very much in this war time, although here is no real war, and there are no things that would be worth buying because nothing arrives here securely. pacem depossimus omnes [Latin: We all put aside peace]. I am obliged to give my highest thanks to the Juncker Brother for the complete though brief news regarding the war events and the internal affairs. The news about the highly beloved Father Provincial Father Rudolf Burkardt, Father Rector in Lucern [Latin]. Would you please send a most friendly greeting to him and all other acquaintances, especially to the young Honorable Jost Heinrich whose feast day I am celebrating today in the new church that I am building at great expense to the honor of Saint Joseph and which is more than 30 miles away from my own mission Ures. I am delighted to hear of his well being and hope that he will replace what I have deprived my old family through my lackluster attitude.

The letter of which the Juncker Brother makes mention, written on the 8th of 1744 [perhaps August] and sent here through the Honorable Joven, I have not received. The heat is great, we sweat all the time, the mosquitoes are unbearable, the water is warm, and there are heat blisters over the whole body [or in the body]. Therefore I do not keep writing this letter [Neg. 51967] until there will be a better time.

I recommend myself to his brotherly favors
and remain the most loyal brother Philippus Segesser Soc. Jesu.
Issued in the new tribe [community?] called San Joseph de los Pimas, July 15, 1746. Because I am away from my mission, I do not have the proper address with me, therefore I write it in Spanish. The opportunity to write [this letter] arose by chance. Etc.
Letter 63

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, September 7th, 1749 (Neg. 51969 - 51972)

Neg. ASM 51969
PA 437/589
No. 4

Highly Noble Juncker Brother,

I do not doubt that my Juncker Brother has received several of my letters since I have received one now in which my Juncker Brother informs me that the most beloved Honorable Mother and all the most beloved relatives are in good, comfortable health. May God bring about that this short letter—the many tasks and other troubles with which I really have to cope and am burdened like Job with painful sores all over the body, though not with the same patience [as Job], sighing over the excessive heat that I have already talked about—will reach you in the same stage of happiness. I hope that you will all dignify yourself by remembering me as much as I am greeting you all heartily with this wish [letter].

In general, I am at full strength while I just completed my 60th year last September, and I am only in a little need of my eye glasses when I want to read something at night. But I cannot get any according to my needs because the Procuratores send from Mexico, what they ever fancy, so I have to cope with that what I have here. They think that sending anything to Sonóra is like dropping it into Hell. And nothing is sent back to them from Sonóra, whether it would be official or not. That is very true because the payment for the messenger for the distance of 500 miles is not worth it. With the last letter I received a short printed copy [or a text] from which I learn about the conditions in Europe. In the meantime the much desired news arrived that a general peace has been negotiated. May God confirm it through long lasting years to come. In the same letter my Honorable Brother invites me to come to Ruswill in order to fight false claims.

I must admit, unless God Himself would want me to do so, I would not like to comply insofar in this regard time would be spent more for the temporal than for the spiritual good. (Especially in my mission, considering the unrest in my house. Think of all the costs and the indescribable losses, with which a college could be paid for.) The Duana [customs] in Genoa could not be compared with it, especially because of the many messengers and letters and the countless guests who arrive here, because you do not find any other inns in Sonóra, except for the houses of the Fathers. And everything is paid with the currency that the guests, who go to Ratthausen, tend to use for payment [free]. This is disgusting. [Neg. 51970] It seems that I will soon have to leave with an empty bag. However, we all have to submit to God’s will and must serve him in whatever position He has called us to.

My fellow countrymen are fortunate that they are not short of eager missioneros [Spanish], I meant missionary [Latin]. Juncker Brother, tell me, how did the affair come to an end. And who
was the rebel leader Jacob, and from what canton did he come? Was he a learned person, or an ignoramus?

Here I am stuck between two groups of enemies who daily threaten us with imprisonment and death. On the one side are the so-called Apáches, very dangerous, they rob and steal, kill whomever they can find, and mostly hide in the mountain tops or valleys, from where they can espy the opportunity to carry out an ambush. They escape on horseback once they have attacked.

On the other side the so-called Seris commit the same crimes, and they are not more than ten hours away from here. My steward in Santa Rosalia, which is another village that belongs to this mission, writes to me that these Seris have led away my horses. Spanish weapons are in the hands of these enemies. But those [Spaniards?] bother as much with them as the Tyrolean farmers [with the Hapbsburgians] when [Emperor] Maximilian and the Count Arco wanted to travel to Trento.²²⁶

Moreover, I face the requirement to entertain the Spanish guests, although the king pays them enough as salary. What would the European soldiers say about the American conditions? God willing, I will certainly find a sure opportunity to send an outline of this military campaign [?], which I am already preparing, apart from other topics. Perhaps in the time of peace, if it should last, a good opportunity might come up. Perhaps now my Juncker Brother could find out where the box that was sent to Cadiz might be located now, which I would very much like to receive. Could the Juncker Brother send me the history of the Bavaria province [Jesuit], which the Father Agricola and later another Father have written and completed in two volumes, and this best through worldly channels (not through the hands of our own people [the Jesuits] because our people take such things as their own property. It might be that this happens, as my Honorable Mother reported in a letter, as far as I can remember). This would be a great favor for me, etc.

In the last month of May I held the ceremony for the opening of the church and house in the new tribal community of Saint Joseph de los Pimas, which cost more than previously expected. Everything worked in a way which could not have been better anywhere else. I erected the building in the way of a castle or a fortress in order to secure it from the continuous attacks by the rebellious Indians. [Neg. 51971] In view of this kind of structure the Viceroy ordered that a similar one should be erected in the area of the Seris, of whom I have reported above. Some have requested wooden beams in order to secure their houses that way,²²⁷ especially against the fire because those above mentioned Indians tend to burn down the houses. Since the domicile where I stay is exposed to that danger, I have the intention to do the same and remodel it, that is, once I will have recovered [financially] since the building that I referred to above, de San Jos[eph] de los Pimas, cost me many thousand Spanish thalers.

Both the church as well as the house, together with other buildings that have been erected for visiting travelers were built the same way. The latter serve those [travelers] as a guest house, but not supplied with food. As I say, they are painted on the inside with very good pezel [perhaps: brushes?], a type of work that has not yet been seen in these lands. I handed over this building [site] to another Father, with whom I am getting along very well. I began with the construction when I was in Tecoripa. Since my Superiors had ordered me to go to Ures before I could complete the project, they gave me the permission to finish it all. I had to travel very much because it is far away from here. If I had not taken this upon myself, everyone would have said that it could hardly be done or would never have been carried out.

Father Casparus Stiger in the Pimería Alta has another great church, just in that mission where I spent time first, a year, in San Ignacio to learn the language. That church is now completed, and he invited me to give the sermon on the day of the Saint Franciscus Xaver, on the day when the
church is supposed to be dedicated. The Father Casparus, of whom I had written the other time, had come here with me from Geno. If you might want to ask—since he was born not far from Feldkirch and was a church minister, before he entered the Jesuit Order, at a place not far from Castle Platen, where his friends might live.\textsuperscript{228} Then my Juncker Brother could give them the comforting information that he is in good health, after he had been sick for a year [?]. But now he is doing well and commands a very good mind and piety. With one word: \textit{bonus Missionarius, optimus Israelita} [Latin: a good missionary is the best Israelite]. [\textbf{Neg. 51972}]

This letter I am sending via a special messenger to the Father Joan Antonio Balthasar in Mexico so that he can include it in one of his own letters and send it to Europe. How is my Nephew doing? How is he progressing with his experiences? May he become a good lawyer, a jurist, well experienced in the laws of the fatherland, \textit{imprimis bonus christianus evadat, honor patris, solatium avunculi sui; refugium suorum, ut caput familia Ec. quem in Domino osculor y amplector} [Latin: Most importantly, let him go forth as a good Christian, an honor to his father, a solace for his grandfathers, a refuge for his relatives, and the head of the family, etc., whom I kiss and embrace in the Lord]. If the Juncker Brother might send me some items, he should, as I have already reminded him, ship it through the hands of the merchants because [then] they will not get lost on the other side [of the Atlantic]. In Mexico I have a good friend who is the Consul for Commerce and is called Don Domingo Gomendio, well known in Cadiz, etc.

I recommend myself to the brotherly favors with all holy prayers, Ures, September 7, 1749.

My Highly Honorable Juncker Brother’s
most loyal brother
Phelipe Segesser Jhs.

If some mistakes might have crept into this letter, the Juncker Brother can hide and correct them, the messenger does not allow me to linger and to read the letter over, etc. etc. etc.

\textbf{Letter 64}

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, September 18, 1750 (\textbf{Neg. 51956-51959})

\textbf{Neg. ASM 51956}
PA 437/589
No. 9

Highly Noble and Highly Born Juncker Brother, \textit{Genner} or Herold\textsuperscript{229} Honorable Joseph Ulrich Segeßer von Bruneg etc.
Because of certain very important businesses I am sending an extra messenger from here to Mexico who will be paid with 300 Spanish thaler and will have at his disposal 8 to 10 mules, etc. I cannot allow this opportunity to pass to find out whether my highly noble friends (to whom all and everyone I am sending special greetings from my heart and whom I embrace in the name of the Lord) are in their desired well-being and healthy. It would give me great comfort to get assured about that, as I am also praying to God to preserve everyone in the best conditions.

Regarding my real health, I must admit that I am not well. If the ailing stomach is not going to recover (I have suffered for more than three months from dysentery and feel pretty weak, and I can barely read the Holy Mass without interruption), this might be the last letter since most of the Fathers (who died during my time here and some of whom I assisted in their suffering) have sent their souls to the eternal life as a result of this sickness. But, as far as that concerns, God is the one who predetermines, according to His divine will, what will serve each one of us best, etc. Not a long time ago I wrote to my Highly Noble Juncker Brother about all the noteworthy things that have happened here, such as that we are everywhere and at all times surrounded by dangerous enemies and are threatened to be overpowered and attacked by them.

Until now we have not been able to appease them, although a military campaign was organized against them. The intention was to chase the mentioned enemy, called Seris, away, coming from a neighboring island. That, however, is very difficult because there are no ships to cross the sea to the other coast. We have only oak trunks [dug-out canoes], as we call them in our fatherland, which are very dangerous and can easily sink. And since there is very little water for the people and horses, and since the heat is very intense, the wild areas overgrown very densely, hence almost impossible to penetrate, these and other conditions make it very difficult to strike successfully.

The day before yesterday the news arrived that many of the soldiers have become sick, and if that grows, all efforts might have been in vain. While the company moved away from here, a troop of [gewetter?] enemies approached the villages in my district and killed 18 of my very good horses with arrows. I need those when an emergency arises to assist an exhausted or sick person, since the various tribes [Neg. 51957] live far apart, and it is impossible to get there on foot, especially when there is great urgency. Moreover, they [the enemies] drove away more than 50 horses with them, and we had no chance to resist them because all those with weapons have left for the island Tiburon, which is its name. I am afraid that they [the Indians] will come to burn down the villages. This would pain me very much because it takes an inexpressible effort to build anything in these lands, and even more to equip these buildings with whatever is necessary. By God, if all my villages and also those of the other missionary fathers would have been like the one in Saint Joseph de los pimas that had been built completely new from the ground up. Then we would have one worry less how to resist all those Indian enemies who do not know how to use any other weapons but lances, arrows, and fire.

The last letter that I had received from my Highly Noble Juncker Brother had been written on December 10, 1748. Since then for two years I have not received any other. Many different things and changes must have happened [since then at home]. I anxiously desire to receive news about them because I only trust what my Highly Noble Juncker Brother reports to me insofar as the newspaper that we receive commonly contain wrong accounts. The rumor here claims that the Roman Pope, the Roman [German] Emperor, and the King of England have died. This seems rather trustworthy because we have not received any news from Spain and no ship has arrived in Veracruz
for six months. However, someone wrote to me that the new missionaries have arrived, and I hope that they also bring some letters.

Similarly, the guidelines for our province have not yet arrived, while the old ones have expired in the month of March. It might well be that one or the other boxes might have arrived with the ships together with the new missionary (if that is true). I hope that these do not get into the hands of our people [Jesuits? Spaniards?] because they have little scruple to open them and to grab the best out of them, especially if blessed wax or the previously mentioned sanctity disks might be included. These enjoy a great popularity here in these lands.

On the present opportunity I am also writing to the Honorable Administrator of the late Lord Ansa à Don Thomas de Apodaca, who had written to me from Cadiz that he would send a little box to Mexico at the next chance. I inform him about the other little box that Madame Carpintero had transported to Spain and then ordered that it be delivered to Cadiz.

[I expect] that my Highly Noble Juncker Brother will receive the present letter from that merchant who had written to me a very subservient and polite letter.

Last August, on the third of the month, a lightning bolt killed a [Neg. 51958] Father in the area of Mobas, in the Rectorado de San Francisco Borja, which was the first time that we heard something like that. A few days later another lightning circled around my whole house and the church, but did not cause any harm. It did not dare to overturn the blessing. Otherwise, the lightning has committed its thievery in diverse places and burnt some people and their houses. à fulgure et tempostate libra nos Dne [Latin: May the Lord liberate us from lightning and thunderstorm]. A few days ago it rained again so strongly that two parts of the wall that surrounds the house fell to the ground and killed 20 of the so-called castrated [probably horses]. The most uncomfortable consequence, however, is that this now exposes my house to the enemies, and the season does not permit to build since everything is made out of lutea casa [Latin: clay house]. What you build in the morning will be destroyed in the evening once the rain has come. For that reason this time from St. John’s until October is called the time of the rainy weather [monsoon]. However, this year it was not very favorable, and we are afraid of a great inflation because that [wet] season has not yet arrived. The seeded fields are already parched.

I am writing about that so that the Juncker Brother can see how many worries and how much work a missionary has. I wonder what you would say if you could see just for only one day with how many businesses the Father Philip is burdened every day. For instance, in a very short time he had to provide upon the request of the Honorable General and Governor of this province the entire army with food, such as biscuits, flour, wheat, oat and meat, sugar bread, and other bread for the captains, with horses and mules, etc. etc. How short are the nights, there is little rest, and so much to write for the missionary to the not little disadvantage of for his own things. May all things serve the greater the glory of God [Latin] from whom I do not ask for any other favor but to serve him loyally. May God grant that these barbarians and all the apostates will be forced to return to the true light of the faith. Here is the job, here is the work [Latin].

I wish that you all at home that you enjoy better rest, especially my most beloved Honorable Mother, granted that the dear God has extended her temporal existence until now, which I would love to hear for my particular comfort. The same I wish to all the other dear relatives whom I never forget in my Holy Mass offerings, although they are so far away, as I also wish that they never forget me. To all ladies of the Saint Ursula order, especially those who still know me, I extend my most loyal greeting and request a listing of all those who have deceased from 1729 to the present
year 1750, or the next, 1751 so that I can to enough for them according to our contract. Hence, they also have to hold their promise.

I do not doubt that the young folk and princes are being decorated and Honorable with glorious praemis [Latin: prizes]. [Neg. 51959] At least I felt a particular comfort on the fourth of this month, and would have wished to have been present at the final action.\textsuperscript{233}

I recommend myself especially to the beloved wife of my Highly Honorable Juncker Brother and to the sisters Honorable Anna Barbara, Honorable Anna Maria, and Honorable Elisabeth. If there might be an opportunity, I recommend myself also to the Honorable Sister Lady [sic] Eva in Hermetschwil and the Honorable Sister in Rathausen and the others in Rathausen, as well as the newly entered convent sisters, etc. etc. Please also send my friendly greetings to our former or actually still connected servant woman Francisca and to all acquaintances. I especially recommend myself to brotherly favors and remain my Highly Nobly Born Jucnker Brother’s and Herold’s most loyal brother

Philip Segeßer Jhs.

Ures, September 18, 1750

\textit{en la Provincia de Sonóra} [Spanish: in the Province of Sonóra]

[in another hand:] April 8, 1755 [perhaps the date when the letter was received in Lucerne?]
Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, December 21, 1750

Neg. ASM 51933-51934

Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother,

A few days ago I received at the same time two most beloved letters, in the first of which the Lord Brother reported to me of the improvement in health of the sick Lady Mother, and, immediately following, in the second letter he informed me of the death of the same, blessed by God (may God hold her in his blissfulness!). I thank you for kindly sending these news. From now on I will make every effort to include the memory of my most beloved Lady Mother in the offering of the Holy Mass if she really died. I hasten to add, however, that I had never forgotten to add her to the offering according to my duties and obligation. The same dutifulness I have always observed regarding all my most beloved friends. Today, as I am writing this letters, I offered, as much as was possible, a Holy Mass on the Lady Mother’s anniversary, which attracted a large number of people. I gave a whole or a half loaf of bread, larger than those that are called the Lord’s Bread. Moreover, I handed out a good piece of meat, or rather a quarter of it, divvied up for the rich and the poor because everyone highly appreciates such honor. The same the previous Father Visitator had done, with whom I stayed the very moment when the sad news reached me. All the other Missionary Fathers have offered their Holy Mass for the deceased most beloved mother. One of them wrote to me today that he will offer his Holy Mass in memory of her for the rest of his life.

I mention this so that the Lord Brother and all our relatives can have the same comfort as I receive from all this.

Not long ago I had written to the Lord Brother, and since it might have taken some time that the mentioned letter that I had handed over to the Lord Resident, or governor of this province, could not have been sent, I will travel tomorrow to his fortress [presidio] to give him this letter in person so that he can put it to his own letters. I felt particularly comforted by the good understanding for me that my Lord Brother demonstrates. May God give everyone His divine [blessing, or strength] to continue in carrying out such good virtues. In truth, unity [?] and brotherly love are the best way toward blissfulness. I am particularly pleased about the good arrangement for the children when they serve God alone while having joined their lonely orders. I wish them and also especially their dear parents all good luck and good fortune. I recommend myself to their eager prayer and devotion so that I may serve God alone and the fellow people as is my obligation. I also think especially of my most beloved Lady Sister Barbara whoe really bad condition I regret very much. I commend her particularly to God. I hope that she will return to good health, or that she can offer her sickness with good patience to the dear God, thus earning many rewards.

May my Lord Brother convey my friendly greetings to the old female housemaid Farrmisner and let her know that he keep her particularly in my prayer and my offering the Holy Mass so that God may reward her for the good services that she did for the deceased Lady Mother with His divine blessing both here and there in the blissful eternity.
Father Joan Antonio Balthasar has indeed been selected as the Provincial [governor] of this New-Spanish province by our Father General who has bestowed upon me the office and title of Visitator as a result of his good affection and benevolence which I notice coming from him. This office [although an honor] will be strenuous because of the traveling that I will have to do by default on horseback, especially the traveling through the lands of the enemies.

My Lord Brother may announce this to his friends [relatives] and send them my most obligatory greetings. You can inform also the dear family members, especially the oldest Lord Son. I will be delighted to hear and learn anything praiseworthy from him.

For now I cannot write longer and refer to the previous letter. I recommend myself most submissively to the highly esteemed graces of my Lord Brother and [?].

Ures, en la Mission de la Pimería baxa (not alta; if I might have written alta the other time, I made a mistake). December 2, de 1750 [Spanish].

My Highly Honorable Brother’s
most loyal brother

Philip Segeßer S.J.
Letter 66

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, September 9, 1752 (Neg. 51935-51938)

Neg. ASM 51935
PA 437/589
No. 6

Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother,

I have received the most loving letter dated June 9, from the last year, 1751, with particular comfort, in part because I read in this of the well-being of my Juncker Brother and his most lovely wife. May the benign God preserve everyone in such necessary blissfulness for uncountable years to come, everything to the enhancement of His greater honor and to the praise of the best recommended friendship, for which I offer my ineffectualness in the best possible way, etc.

Apart from a most friendly greeting to all beloved relatives and all acquaintances, to each one particularly and specially, I am very happy that the Honorable Sister and my Juncker Brother’s beloved wife are in good health and can give with all care the necessary comfort to their husbands and Juncker Fathers. This will be a sign that the divine blessing rests on the house and will appear all the time in each family member, which I strive to beg from God every day, in the assurance that likewise all dear relatives will try to secure for me as well [through prayers].

I hope the Juncker Brother will have received in the meantime my writing and answer upon the painful death or passing away of my most beloved Honorable Mother. I entrust myself as well in the divine will, as I hear also of the blissful passing away of my Honorable Aunt Francisca in Vaar, who must have certainly multiplied her many rewards in the long time of her life in spiritual matters. May God grant her eternal peace! what cannot be doubted. Not with the same comfort I remember the troubles of my most beloved Honorable Sisters Barbara and Maria Anna, although I do not doubt that God will give them the necessary strength to sustain their trouble with equanimous good will. This cross [suffering] is the only true and safest way to blissful eternity. I most eagerly await to hear what estate Honorable Jost Herman will have decided to choose for himself.

[Neg. 51936] My Indians have been very happy when they heard that the Juncker Brother is going to clothe five women convents because they hope to receive many and diverse holy objects and the agnus Dei [Latin: lamb of God] from their handy work, although they have not yet seen anything of that what the Juncker Brother in his letter indicates he has shipped. I am writing about this matter upon this opportunity to Lord Thomas Apodaca in Cadiz because he is the very one who had reported to me about such matters. I would like to remind the younger Honorable Nephew Philipp Antonius of what Alexander the Great [Latin] told one of his soldiers: aut nomen aut mores muta [Latin: As the name so the customs change]. This means, he with a decent honor tries to live according to his estate and background. It is very laudable at least to find it in the dynasty. non omnibus omnia [Latin: Not everything is good for everyone].
Reflecting upon what the Juncker Brother tells me about your businesses, I can assure you that although I cannot be compared to a city councilman [in my present situation], I am certainly equal to a lawyer. The jobs [tasks] pile up so much that I hardly find time to finish the breviary. I need three or four pieces of paper to answer the letters and to handle all business. In order to find some to write the present letter, I rose from sleep at midnight in order to compose it, not knowing how the letters are to be formed because writing at candle-light I can see only little. Therefore the Juncker Brother may forgive my mistakes.  

I have the impression that one could find only few post office buildings in Europe that could be compared to my house in terms of messengers and businesses. I could say that I live in the Eagle or Horse Tavern, except that here everything is eaten up without pay. Especially in this rebellious time in which it is necessary to secure our houses with soldiers. For two years everything has been very restive, and my hostile neighbors the Seris burn everything and slaughter everyone. They can murder the inhabitants [of the mission or villages] by way of showing up here or there [unexpectedly], and because the Spanish weapons have no effect because the land is so vast. [Neg. 51937] But partly they achieve their goals because of the great draught, especially this year in which many cattle and horses died because of lack of water. Thus the enemies have a free pass to commit the atrocities. I am afraid they will burn down to ashes another village since they circle around in that neighborhood and have killed all horses or abducted them, not to mention the great damage they have done to the cattle. Further, I am not at all sure whether they will capture me [although] it is so necessary to visit the various tribes.

I am also not safe from my own Indians because their fellow Pimas had risen up against the Spaniards and the Patres ministros [Spanish: Missionary Fathers] (: against the Missionarios: ). That is the so-called Pimas altos, where I was first stationed in San Xavier del Vac, and where they caused great damage. Thereafter they submitted seemingly under the Spanish weapons. Recently I got a letter from the Father Casparo Stiger who, as a good Swiss (he had also travelled with me from the Bavarian province) is staying there alone, reporting that the above mentioned pimen (Pimas) again display a rebellious attitude. [At that time, i.e., in 1751] they had taken the lives of two Fathers, a Spaniard and a Bohemian Father Heinrich Ruhen, and of many neighboring Spaniards during one breakfast and evening dinner. In that year they organized it in such a way that they attacked everywhere in the country where they could suspect to encounter the least soldiers. They wounded the Bavarian Father Jakob Sedelmayr with three arrows. He recovered, though only slowly because the poison with which they cover the arrow heads normally quickly sends those whom they have wounded into the other world.

This mentioned Father Jakob is staying with me after his escape, like others, who escaped the Indians’ raging and who are camping out with me. The Indians have burnt the churches, the ornamenta sacra ([Latin:] the ecclesiastical vestments and all chalices, etc. etc.), and all the houses of the Patri Missionariorum [sic; Latin: missionary fathers], ruined the fields, hence have wiped out all the hard work, carried out with bitter sweat by the Fathers in this province for 80 years, all at once. [Neg. 51938] I would have to write many noteworthy things about all that, if the time were more favorable, but the messenger wants to depart since the sky is lightning up already.

I wish that the building that I am erecting will be successfully completed. At this time everything is very calm, and the rebellious Indians have to think hard where they can find food [literally: access], unless it happens through betrayal.

I have greatly appreciated the regards by the Father Provincial of the Capuchins [back in Europe] whom Father Wegenmann remembers very well [in Sonora]. Therefore I ask the Juncker
Brother to express my most dutiful thanks to him, as well as to all other, whom the Juncker Brother mentions in his letter. I recommend myself to the always best experienced favors of my Juncker Brother and remain

in Ures in the province of Sonora in America, September 9, 1752 [Spanish]
my Highly Honorable Juncker Brother’s
immutably most loyal brother,
Philippus Segesser Soc. Jesu.
Letter 67

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, 1753 (no specific date is given).

Neg. ASM 51941

Highly Honorable Juncker Brother,

Time does not allow me to write a longer letter. But Father Caspar Stiger (my best friend who lives in my neighborhood and to whom I came for a visit in his mission so that we can enjoy each other’s company) asked me to attach this his letter to my own, begging my most beloved Juncker Brother to do him the favor to send it to the place where his Lord Brother lives. He would like to remind him to send back his answer to my highly honored Juncker Brother, who then could include it in his own response which he then would send to me. I am asking most politely my dearest Juncker Brother to do that, and I do not doubt that you will do me this favor. I am obligated to the mentioned Father Caspar in many things, as the Father is obligated to me.

Otherwise, I wrote to my highly honored Juncker Brother recently, and the Father Provincial Joan Antonio Balthasar has written to me that he will ship the letter at the next and best opportunity, just as this letter is also shipped through his hand. I am not doing too well and am busy every day from early in the morning until late at night with the quill in my hand so that I can hardly write the Summum Pontificem [Papal Encyclical]. I believe that no post office in Europe is so busy. May God grant me patience and strength. The Father Provincial has contributed much to this, who has already earlier tried to free me from such burden and yet then, since he was appointed as Provincial, put this burden back onto me. May God reward him for this recognition and intended honor that he has granted me and which which he wanted to award me. I am happy to hear that all my beloved relatives are well, as I am begging the divine grace to grant it, and I pray to the most beloved and highest God that he bestow this goodness on all. Herewith I am sending my heartfelt greetings and hope to receive good and cheerful news from everyone.

There is one thing that I almost would have forgotten. Father Antonius Benz, formerly the teacher of Lord Jost Heinrich, as far as I can remember, extends to the Juncker Brother and his nephew, his former student, a friendly greeting. This Father arrived a month and a little more ago in my mission, healthy and happy; he spent the whole time here and has given me diverse news from our beloved fatherland. I have sent him to a mission, which is practically new and is called Cumuripá, not far away from here, so that I can assist him better at the beginning in all necessary matters. With him three other Germans traveled through here who met, as they said, a German Father and fellow countryman. All were in good health here, and later I traveled personally with them to another province (to which they had been assigned by the Father Provincial because there the task of new conversions is entrusted only to the German because of the great hardship and the poverty which are oppressing the natives) in order to hand them on to their Superior, who is the Father Jakob Sedelmayr. Since I cannot stand riding on a horseback, I traveled partly on a horse, and partly on foot, and partly Indians carried me on two boards, which provided the new guests with a very entertaining spectacle. These followed me, strong and healthy as they are, on horseback, or
rode ahead of me. They would have made very suitable soldiers if the enemy Apaches had attacked us by surprise. But everyone returned and arrived very happily and [. . .] to my house, where I met [again] Father Antonius Benz well and and in good health. I had left him behind during that time [of our travel] in the case that there might have been the need for some confessions or other necessities.

The chests have not yet arrived until today, although the merchant in Cadiz had written to me that he would ship them with the first opportunity. I am awaiting the bleeding instrument, and so, if it might be possible, the two volumes on the history of the Bavarian province written by the Father Agricola.245

The mail couriers do not want to wait much longer. Thus I conclude this letter with most submissive recommendations, remaining in the highly esteemable grace of my Highly Noble Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother Philippus Segesser Soc. Jesu.

P.S.: Regarding the mistakes made with the quill, I hope the Juncker Brother will easily forgive them. The fault lies with the excessive amount of mail [that I have to handle]. I send my greetings to the old house maid Francisca, if she is still alive.
Letter 68

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, April 1753 (Neg. 51953-51955)

Neg. ASM 51953
PA 437/589
No. 10

Highly Honorable Juncker Brother,

At the end of the last month of March I wrote to my Highly Honorable Juncker Brother a longer letter on the occasion that the captain of the nearby fortress (built in the style common here in this land) was to travel to Spain. I had promised to give you notice as soon as I would have received the box, which I now do herewith. In part I want to express my thankfulness, and in part I want to let you know that I found it yesterday with exceptional joy before the sun gave us the pleasure of witnessing its light in the courtyard when I returned from my journey accompanying the Honorable Governor of this province on his return home. This happened because he had granted me the honor to delight me with his invaluable presence during this Holy Week of Passion and of Easter. He had been accompanied by more than 100 people, and this at a time when the female cook who had to prepare everything and ready all the food had fallen into labor.

Since the delivery of the baby went very badly, she exhaled her spirit in sacrifice to the Allmighty on the day following Tuesday. This meant that our Indian cooks were not able to prepare the food for so many guests, hence it was necessary to bring in a cook (male or female) from far away. I had anticipated that, but I had not known in which condition she [his previous cook] had really been. Perhaps the arduous travel had weakened her; may God grant her eternal peace and the reward that I could not give her (there was a long interval [during which I did not see her]).

[To return where I had left off, I said that I have received yesterday [these boxes] in good conditions with little damage, except for some of the glass pans from the Weichbrunn chests [?] perhaps: mobile baptism fonts] made in Rathausen that were broken. In my estimation this box was one which our dearest deceased Honorable Mother, whom God may delight in His glory, had sent out from Lucerne while she still had been alive, according to some letters from 1738 or 1739 that had been enclosed. [Neg. 51954] The content of the box arrived here without noticeable damage, although the box reached me worm-eaten and rotten. It is amazing that it has not fallen apart on the journey being carried here and there. May God be praised that this box reached me so well since I have heard that another box and a little chest had been sent to Cadiz via Madrid, and for which the Juncker Brother sent me tanto del rezo [Spanish: a receipt]. It had been delivered or sent by the widow of the deceased Lord Philip de Anssa or by the now dead brother of the Honorable Captain Anssa who was killed by the enemies [Indians].

I hope to receive that box at another occasion. In the meantime, I will have to make an effort to collect a few things from this earth here in order to cope with some of the demanding and greedy
requests by the Indians, as long as the dear God might prolong the time of my life and to allow me to carry out the uncountable businesses.

Dear Brother, accept in the meantime all my friendliest greetings and obligatory thanks for such invaluable and many things that have reached me here in a good condition. In fact, today I have sent some of those items to the Honorable Governor of this huge province which he will certainly appreciate highly because the letters that had arrived here, included in the above mentioned box, had been written fourteen years ago, and some of those who had written them have exchanged the earthly existence with the eternal one. I do not write in greater detail this time to them until I will have learned of their health, which I desire very much, and when I will have more peace of mind, since right now I find myself deeply occupied with sending letters to Mexico about administrative duties of the province. Then I will have an opportunity to write to everyone. In the meantime they all can regard this letter as addressed to them individually. Father Provincial Johann Anthonius Balthasar has Honorable me at this time with very useful religious objects and lithographs. May God reward him for that.

He [Balthasar] can easily do that since he is sitting on the wooden board \textsuperscript{246} in a rich city, although I am not short of items that could be of use for them. I am also deeply obliged to him because of his great liking that he has shown me. He is now finishing his last \textit{visita} [Latin: inspection tour] of his three-year office [term], although he never comes up to here because of the long and great distance. But I will visit them all, once I will have to carry out this office, which is coming up for me soon. To visit these is much more dangerous because of the barbarous enemies, what the Juncker Provincial must sense. And it is very troublesome to travel from one mission to the other, etc.

I would be pleased to hear from the well-being and good health of all our family members. As far as I am concerned, old age makes itself known a little, yet I am very anxious to serve each and everyone, as far as my strength permits. I recommend myself to their holy prayer, and remain, with special greetings, my Juncker Brother’s

most loyal servant and brother

Philip Segesser Jhs.
Letter 69

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, April 28, 1754 (Neg. 51960-51962)

Neg. ASM 51960
PA 437/589 (the letter in this file appears to be a copy by another hand)
No. 13

Highly Honorable Juncker Brother.

I have received at the end of the month of March the beloved and highly valuable brotherly letter from May 19, the previous year of 1753, which gave me much consolation because of the comforting news of the good health that dear God has granted my Juncker Brother, the Honorable Sisters, and to all dear relatives most mercifully. May this dearest God continue to send these blissful news by preserving both the well-being of their bodies and souls throughout countless years, as I am begging for them in my daily Mass offerings. The above mentioned letter I have received through the hand of Thomas de Apodaca from Cadiz, and I am sending this current letter also by way of the Honorable Thomas who demonstrates and proves to me, just like his aviador or corrispondente [Spanish: correspondent] in Mexico, his willingness to serve me. The other box of which the Juncker Brother has given me notice, and a tanto de recibo [Spanish: receipt] included by the Honorable Maria Rosa de Olcagechezanaste I have not yet received, and Don Thomas knew nothing of it either. So I am sending him another letter to inquire where it might have been left behind.

The writing or letter that had been enclosed and had been addressed to Father Caspar Stiger I have forwarded to him right away. But he has not sent an answer, perhaps because he does not feel well. Or perhaps because his Indians are in a riotous mood, for which reason the Honorable Governor went to that land to nip that unrest in the bud. Such unrest in reality causes much work and creates many costs. The Seris, whom I have mentioned before, my evil neighbors, also cause me great damage, although they have sent a representative to visit me so that I maintain the peace treaty with them, as I have truly been reciprocated by them. They have then abstained from slaying and murder. Yet, until now, they have not refrained from abducting the cattle and horses from the meadows and fields; hence there is pax [peace, Latin], sure, pax, et non est pax [Latin: yet there is no peace].

I cannot do anything else but to submit under the divine commands, and I hope that my dearest Honorable sister Magdalena Barbara may have received the blessed peace when she passed away. Nevertheless, in my usual ceremony I have dedicated the Holy Mass to God Almighty both for her blessed soul and that of Juncker Brother-in-law Franz’s sister, [Neg. 51961] in case they might need more [spiritual] support, and this in the presence of all my Indians and the neighboring Spaniards. May God grant them and all the beloved ones who have died eternal peace. Amen. May He grant us His grace so that we may find later at our death and during our life a blessed end.
The Honorable Sister Elisabeth is acting correctly in my estimation, and Saint Paul has been of the same opinion. May the Juncker Brother recommend me in the best way to them, as well as to my other siblings, all relatives, and especially to Honorable Jost Henrich (Heinrich) and his beloved Honorable wife, and so to the Honorable Margareta Agathe, whose soul is striving to enter the Heavenly glory.

(13) I have read with special consolation and pleasure the description of the new building, and this with no little desire to spend some time there and to enjoy the desired consolation to have the pleasure of spending time with the dear relatives.

The countless business matters, the continuous correspondence [he uses the term ‘letter carriers’] (in this year, 1753, even two resmas papel [reams of paper] have not been enough to answer all the letters and other writings, as the need arises. I even hardly find the time to read the breviary and to carry out other spiritual exercises. Then there are the unexpected daily guests, among them the most highly ranking in this province, such as the governors, mayors, captains, and all, really all, arrive with very many servants, and not one pays the least amount of money, yet they eat up my mission and exhaust me so much that I often do not know how to handle my budget. I have to get involved in everything and make orders concerning the kitchen, the garden, fields, corn boxes, cattle, and horses, chicken, pigeons, geese, pigs, mules. With one word, everything that concerns both the church and the household falls on me since I do not find any trustworthy servant in these regions. [Anyone whom I hire] immediately acts arrogantly and requires supervision by the father missionary, and later must be paid 500 to 600 Spanish thalers, which cost a lot of sweat and labor to come by.

After all, because of the constant riots of the Indians one cannot work securely in the silver and gold mines [literally: mountains]. The above mentioned Apaches last week killed a priest and seven servants. He had traveled to the house of a sick person to take his confession. The Apaches surround one side of my mission, the above mentioned Seris the other. A group of the Pima Indians also display hostility and cause great damage. The Spaniards’ weapons are not enough to quench the fire at all spots. The Hellish fiend makes great efforts to maintain unrest everywhere in order to prevent the honor of God and the acceptance of Christianity to the best of his abilities. I am not telling you anything about the means by which he [might] succeed in that, perhaps you understand what I mean.

Father Johannes Antonius Balthasar who is completing his service as Provincial, is now Procurator of these missions. This created some astonishment as to why he was not promoted to other usual honors. I am currently the Rector of this Rectory of San Francisco Xavier, after I had completed the office of Visitor of this province. One should not place too much weight on these honorary titles because they go away as they have arrived, and produce little profit.

I am finishing my letter now because much has happened that needs to be written up. The letter, quoted by the Juncker Brother, in which he reports of the death of my beloved Honorable sister Maria Barbara I have also received. May he include me in the holy prayers of all my most beloved relatives and acquaintances, and especially in the brotherly grace of my Juncker Brother, who will [as I hope] recommend me to all those Fathers in the college known to me, and also to the new Father Provincial Father Joseph Dichel, who will not fail to keep me in his mind.

Ures, Province of Sonora in America [Spanish], April 28, year 1754.

My Highly Born Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother Philipp Segesser JHS.
Highly Honorable Jr. Brother Herold or Banner Carrier,

A short time ago I wrote this letter to the Juncker Brother and then sent this very same letter with our messenger, who from year to year usually brings us the necessary essentials. And this writing must be handed over via the secular hand, that is, via the care of Don Thomas Apodaca who resides in Cadiz: I am referring to this letter now. Recently the Father Caspar Stiger sent me the letter of which I have written in the first letter. He had not responded because he had not felt well and had been very busy because of the riotous Indians in his province. Until now he has not overcome his trouble, although it has become a little easier because the leading figures of the rebellion have been captured and taken away. [Caspar Stiger] sends his friendly and humble greetings to my Juncker Brother with obligatory thankfulness his service [on his behalf].

He anxiously requests from him to forward, with the usual carefulness, this enclosed letter to Sankt Gallen or, if the opportunity arises, to Feldkirch. I beg my Juncker Brother to do this service [for him]. Although this mentioned Father Caspar has not recovered from his sickness, he feels somewhat better than before. In the meantime few events have occurred that would be worth to be reported, except that not far from here a goldmine was discovered. They say that it is very rich. May God grant that this will be true. Then this mission will recover a little, after it has, as I have told you previously, suffered many losses because of the constant unrests by the hostile neighbors and because of the need to entertain guests and soldiers who either stay here or pass through. Apart from that, I am busy to create some security for this mission church and the houses by means of the remains of the previous constructions. I try to erect a good ring wall with a gate and thus to secure everything, especially to prevent that the hostile Indians do not burn down everything to ashes, which is the first thing which they usually do.

I am writing this letter on the field in a hut out of tree branches because it is harvest time and hence necessary [Neg. 51940] that someone stays here all the time insofar as neither the Indians nor the Spaniards care very little for that what they do not own, although the missionary works for their own profit and that of their church. Until now, as I am writing this, I have harvested 500 bushels of grain. This is at first treated by the horses who separate the straw from the kernels by stepping on it with their feet led around in a circle surrounded by a fence. Afterwards the Indians clean it, and then it is stored in specific corn containers for the daily use. Threshing is unknown here, and there is also no time for it because throughout the whole year we have work to do on the field. Hardly has one thing come to an end, does the other one begin. I hope that we will be able at the end of the
harvest to lock away at least thousand (1000) and several hundred bushels. What the Indians will collect will amount to more than 3000 bushels, and this among my tribes of Ures alone.

I would greatly appreciate it if the Juncker Brother would send me at the next opportunity, among other items two or three ordinary and specifically flax beaters [?] because although here you can get all kinds of craftsmen, there is none who could produce such beaters. It would not be necessary to send along the little board to which the flax piles are to be attached because that can be easily made here. I have grown flax at different seasons, but it did not help me because I could not get the mentioned tool, which would be a very useful thing here since two yards of linen cost here two Spanish thaler.

I fully recognize that I am extremely bothersome, but where [else] could I expect better help? The [passing of] time, the ink, and the most painful heat of the sun hamper my desire to [keep] writing. Therefore I recommend myself most humbly to everyone, and send my friendliest greeting. I would be delighted [to know] that you are all in good health. I entrust myself to all your prayer. Campo de Ures, June 17, 1754.

My Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother’s most loyal Philipp Segesser Jhs.
Letter 71

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, June 3, 1755 (Neg. 51963-51966)

Neg. ASM 51963²⁵⁰

Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother,

The highly appreciated, though little comforting letter of my highly honored Juncker Brother from January 3 of the past year 1754 I have received yesterday evening just before bedtime here in Ures, causing me great sorrow. This meant that I spent the entire night with much unrest until the rising morning star allowed me to offer Holy Mass to the dear God for the Lady Sister-in-Law and beloved wife of my Juncker Brother, who had passed away in the love of God. Of course, I had hoped that she would not yet have the need for that. May God grant her and all dear relatives who have passed away, especially to our small family, eternal joys and blissfulness. Although I have received the news here so late, I am filled with the desire to keep them all in my memory every day, which is a consequence of our friendship in God first and foremost, and which I want to do so that they do not lack in my intercession for them, when the letter will reach them.

I assume that in the meantime my Juncker Brother (I use this short title to use the paper for other aspects) has received the other letters, from which you could see and learn that I have gotten the mentioned letters that had been sent via Rome through the hands of Lord Apodaca. They reached me the past year, which I have already confirmed. Recently I also received a letter from Lord Apodaca in which he informs me that he did not receive any other chest than the one that had arrived here two years ago and which had been delayed by fourteen years. That had been the chest with the fishing net and all the other delightful and most treasured things, especially the sanctity tablets. So he says that he had not yet received the one chest that the Juncker Brother had sent with the Lady Ambassador, wife of the Lord Ambassador, when she went to Madrid, although I had informed him of the Recibo (Spanish: receipt) that the Juncker Brother had copied in his letter. [Neg. 51964]

As far as Lady Sister Elisabeth is concerned, I believe that she follows, judging from the letter by the Juncker Brother that I have received last, the advice of Saint Paul. The same Saint Apostle writes at a later point: melius est nubere, quam uri (Latin: it is better to marry than to burn). Who can struggle against it when her desire turns that way, although I believe that she would have done better to observe and protect her [virginal] status: si vis nubere, nube pari (Latin: if you want to marry, marry an equal partner). May that be as is, once things have happened, one ought to talk about them in the best possible way. I will be delighted if she and her new husband can live in the same joyful manner as she did with the first husband. I will pray that she will receive the divine blessing and the desired fruit [children]. I send her not only my brotherly affection, but also my heartfelt greetings to her and her husband, and wish that they will live in prosperity.

I had hoped to receive a more comforting news about the [brother's] oldest Lord Son, and I would have liked to know whether the canonisses have agreed to provide, as would be their duty, distraction to fight the Juncker Brother’s loneliness and to take care of the household. As to the news about the other Lord Son and novice S.J. [apprentice in the Jesuit order], I have been very delighted.
May God grant him His divine blessing so that he can substitute in the [Jesuit] Province what was lacking because of my lack of skills. I would have been content to serve as a sacristan, and as such I would have had better opportunities to converse more often with God. By contrast, [here in Sonora] the worldly business, unbearable unrest, constantly hostile attacks from all sides, the many guests, and the overburdening with tasks, finally the thankless Indians prevent me, so to speak, everywhere to carry out my spiritual things. But one has to comfort oneself that not all missions are like that of Ures, which resembles a Duana [he means: aduana, Spanish = customs house] of Geneva or Madrid, or would have to be compared with the Eagle or Pony Inn with the difference that in Ures everything is paid for at no cost with a “Vergeltsgott” [German = May God reward you for it]. If God does not accept this labors instead of the devotion, this missionary is in a bad shape. It costs so much sweat and toil to take care for everyone and everything! à los Ures – à los Ures – à los Ures (Spanish = let’s go to Ures!) everyone says, but this is not of advantage [for the mission], but rather everything serves to its disadvantage. What would one say about such a loss in Rathausen? And how is the innocent soul of my Lady Sister Franziska Hortensia doing? I am sending thousand greetings to her and to all her holy fellow sisters, especially to the gracious Lady Abbess.

Father Rector Juan Antonio Balthasar, who also holds the title of Procurator of the Missions and is likewise heavily burdened with businesses, informed me that his chest had arrived in Lucerne. I reported about that to the Juncker Brother in the last letter and explained that here in these lands there is a huge difference whether someone is a Provincial or a missionary; whether one lives in cities among many who have reason, or among wild Indians; whether in the midst of all sorts of trade or in lack of all necessary things because the soil does not yield anything except grain and corn [maize], and even that not everywhere so that the missionary has to water it with his sweat.

Father Provincial, Father Diehl, to whom I hope to be recommended the most highly, will, in my opinion, command better skills to settle a number of things than a simple sacristan in the Jesuit church in Lucerne, sapienti pauca [Latin: a few words for the wise one!]. Nevertheless I am thinking for some time now about how I could ship some rare objects, though not worth much, if a convenient opportunity might arise. If some things might arrive for me with the chest which the Highly Noble Brother Juncker must certainly have shipped to the Father Balthasar in Mexico, then I do not doubt that they will be sent to me, especially because the above mentioned Father Balthasar tends to share with me some of those things that he receives.

The Father Procuratores are expected to arrive in Mexico at the end of this year. Hence I cannot expect to receive anything until the future, next year, that is, nothing for the year 1757, unless one of the mentioned chests might arrive [Neg. 51966] because the waggoners depart from Mexico at the latest in the middle of December and arrive here the next April or May; they need as much time for the return journey. Verum sat cito, si sat bene [Latin = Truly it is early enough if it is in good condition]. May God grant us health, both to my Juncker Brother and myself so that this desired news may be received happily.

Last year I did not do so well and spent three months in bed, until the beginning of the new year, when, with the good wishes by the Juncker Brother, my condition improved. Now I am well again, praised be the Lord. With particular comfort I receive the highly esteemed remembrance from Father Provincial, Father Wagenmans. If an opportunity might arise, I would like to ask the Juncker Brother to return similarly the most loyal greetings, and also to all the others who keep me in mind, especially to all friends and most beloved siblings, for whom I beg of the dear God good health and
continuous happiness; particularly that He may grant and extend the same to my Highly Honored Juncker Brother for many blissful years with the greatest comfort.

I remain at Ures, June 3, 1755,
My Highly honored Juncker Brother’s
and Brother Herold’s most loyal
Philipp Segesser S.J.
Letter 72

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de los Ures, January 23, 1758 (Neg. 51977 – 51982)

Neg. ASM 51977
PA 437/589 (this seems to be a copy by another hand)
No. 18

Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother,

I believe that I have answered to some extent the four letters that I have received and that are now in my hands (especially to the one in which the Juncker Brother gives me news of the sorrowful passing away of my most beloved Honorable Sister and of the wife of my Juncker Brother, who is enjoying the same glory, as I steadfastly hope, and whom I remember since the time when the news had arrived both in the Holy Mass offering and in other prayers, etc.). Nevertheless I assure my Juncker Brother that I do not forget [to keep him in my prayers] (although to remember other things would be meaningless), and so his own family members and all the others, as my obligation requires. And I do not doubt that my most beloved relatives will do the same for me. In the first letter, which was written on January 3, 1754, I am informed that there was some hope for an intimate connection [marriage] between Juncker Franz Urs Balthasar’s son with whom, I do not know. Also, I was told that a little box was being prepared, or was supposed to be prepared to be shipped in the luggage of the Fathers Procuratores, who would later give me an announcement [about the safe arrival]. Then I learned that my Honorable Father Franz Joseph in Landsberg is feeling well, which delighted me much. May God give him luck and His divine blessing so that he can substitute for what I have been amiss in. I would love to be informed about his future progress and acceptance [in the Jesuit College?].

Now I turn to the other letter that I have received and which was sent on May 26, 1754 via the Fathers Procuratores and took three years to reach me. In the meantime Father Johannes Antonius Balthasar has become totally blind, so he forwarded the little box to me as it had been delivered to him without arranging it to take out his own things, indicating to me that since he is blind (which the [entire] province regrets very much) nothing of those things that were sent to him could be of use for him. I should take those without scruple for my own use or utilize them where it would seem best for me. I should send back to him only those items of which I thought that they would be useful for him. But I saw that very little would be helpful for him. If other such items get here (I mean the paper pictures, which is the most that is sent to him and of which, even well illuminated ones, many can be found in Mexico. Then there are the four glass plates, three of which were broken. They are of better use here than in Mexico [Neg. 51981].

Then two crosses, and six needle-point [?] pictures that I know more than others how to appreciate, and if I should take them as my property, I think I can, with good justification, keep these gifts from the Juncker Franz Urs Balthasar in these specific circumstances, especially because they have been shipped to me over such a long distance up to here. Only that silver plate on which you can see Adam in Paradise I could send as a gift to the Father Johann Antonius (so to speak from
foreign hands), without knowing whether I would thereby carry out his command or not. This
happens often, as when some who assist him in the Office of the Procurator, which he runs despite
being blind, do as they like, and thereby deceive him, telling him that they did what he ordered, as
the new missionaries tell often enough. Hence I kept that one for myself and am sending in its stead
and in place of other items a golden ball to the Father Johannes Antonius so that he can use it as his
likes it and where it is most necessary, even though he will not suffer from penury in his office. In
truth, his blindness is much to be lamented because he enjoys such natural gifts with which he can
achieve many great things in the province, as I am told. Otherwise he possesses great strength and
health, is loved by many, but who knows what God has determined in His plans?

As to the other items that the Juncker Brother and the others have sent me in the little chest,
which are all very valuable, they have suffered little damage; everything arrived to my particular
heartfelt comfort, as I can see from the enclosed inventory list. So I cannot express enough of my
thanks for everything individually, but especially for the [Jesuit] history of the [Bavarian] province
and the instruments to exsanguinate/bleed, although all things enclosed deserve equal thanks and
are very much appreciated here, such as the relics, sanctity tables, of which we would need hundreds
for those who desire them. Thanks also for the rosary from the Sisters of the St. Brigit Order, the
Roman indulgence penny, then the gemünden [common?] pennies, which the Indians know well to
differentiate, yet are also very good. The two catalogues served us Germans very well as diversion.

I was particularly pleased with the city calendar which decorates now, next to other images
of many German and Italian cities that were sent to me from Mexico, my own room. [Neg. 51982].
Equally the scapulars are much appreciated. I must admit that everything which the Juncker Brother
has sent me, along with the other items which the Procuratores have sent, will be by far not enough
to meet all demands. All kinds of people of higher ranks have written from afar, even the governor
of the province and the captains of the fortress, who tend to fight over who among them could get
something, [have requested something]. The precious crosses and horse-prüßen [whips?] have
served well for that purpose, and so the sent image of the paradise in silver, and uniquely created
tables that had been shipped to the Father Johannis Anthonius. They will serve for the same
purposes since we very much need the good favors of those lords. The benediction pillow [?] has
been placed in my new living room, and the Honorable Governor said, when he visited me a few
days ago, in astonishment: this piece of work smells [feels] like it had been done by a sister. These
lords know how to talk like the cavaliers who serve the Spanish king himself and are sent here to
get rich, etc. I would have to write a lot to tell you about these highly precious items. But I cannot
neglect to indicate the great anxiety to enjoy a good evening meal in the new house, the tipue and
delineation [perhaps outline and blueprint] of which I have viewed with great joy and astonishment,
although that might happen in the old Shrovetide.252

May God grant all family members253 and the dear relatives of my Juncker Brother, as well
all descendants, a long life to enjoy in the future this delightful domicile for a long time in health,
well-being, and blissfulness!

I express many thanks for the great love, favor, and admiration with which my Juncker
Brother wanted to honor me. Likewise, I would like to ask my Juncker Brother to extend all my
obligatory thanks to the Juncker Franz Urs Balthasar for those items that I have received and also
for those that had been intended for the Father Johann Anthonius but ended up with me upon his
instruction. Would the Juncker Brother give254 to the mentioned Juncker Franz Urs some things in
my name, if he does not mind. They are only an Anta, or painted hides, two of which are almost
identical. This only if the Juncker Brother does not regard this as a filial matter. I must admit that
I have thought for a long time whether it would be reasonable to send this bagatelle over such a distance through the hands of [Neg. 51978] Honorable Thomas de Apodaca who has arrived with the fleet in this part of the world [and sent me] from Veracruz the first of his letter, together with the enclosed letter by my Juncker Brother from March 1, 1756, and then the next, written a few weeks later, together with the one also from my Juncker Brother from March 14, 1757.

These I have received as a particular gift on the first day of this new year. Finally I decided to utilize this opportunity, although all [three of them together] are not worth one heller [farthing] (and those who will see these hides will regard my shipment as a sign of lack of modesty), because that mentioned lord has offered me his service. At any rate, these filial things are packed in a chest (which weighs more by itself than the content, but it had to have that size because of those Antas or colored trellis coverings). Whatever the cost might be for the transport, it is free until Genoa. I hope that the Juncker Brother will find a mutual agreement with those who will ship the chest from there. Once could pay for the postage from here to our fatherland only with difficulties. You will find a lot of cotton in it because I lack other things to fill the chest, but I could not accommodate the content better.

The Juncker Brother will forgive me [I hope], if it becomes bothersome for him. Believe me, this is an expression of brotherly memory and love; hence I hope that everything, although so simple, will arrive well.

In the letter written on March 1, 1756 was also enclosed a letter to the Father Caspar Stiger. To this I convey the answer upon the good opportunity to the Honorable Minister that the Father Caspar would like to express his deep thanks and humbly recommends himself. I assure my Juncker Brother that I have no other more familiar and more liked companion than this Father Caspar. Just as once Saint Anthony visited the Saint Hermit Paul at his altar, I have visited, although it was not as holy, the Father Caspar in the Pimeria alta, which is at least 60 miles away from here, ad enjoyed a whole loaf of bread with him that God grants us. Because of swollen feet he is somewhat sickly, but he is of good humor.

Regarding the announced passing away of my most beloved Honorable Sister, Honorable Aunt in Bruch, and Honorable Father Brother Heinrich zu Muri I have already answered, and I hope that they will enjoy the eternal joy, although I will not forget them, etc. I am hoping [expecting] for the flax and ordinary beaters, etc. As to another little chest that the Honorable Ambassador [Neg. 51979] is said to have sent from Madrid to Cadiz, the several times mentioned Lord Apodáca writes to me that he needs the das recibo [receipt] (which the widow of Lord Philip Anssa is said to have mailed to the Juncker Brother via the mentioned Honorable Ambassador, of whom the Juncker Brother told me in one of his writings) himself as proof because that mentioned widow cannot remember to have issued such a receipt. Recently the Lord Apodaca wrote to me about that.

Perhaps the Juncker Brother can remember what had been sent in that little chest, which could give me a hint whether it could be the very one that I had received a short time ago? Or could you send the receipt to the Lord Apodaca? I do not doubt that the mentioned earthquake [?] caused a lot of fear. We have read all the circumstances of this general catastrophe read in the newspapers (which tend to arrive here a year late). We have been really informed of the battle that Honorable Braun [?] had to fight against the Prussians, and read in all details that the city of Prague had been relieved [liberated from the siege]. This has given us great joy and comfort.

[Back to Sonora:] I wish that the soldiers would kill and humiliate my neighboring enemies, the Seris, against whom they seriously fight, but they could not find them yet. However, just as I am writing this, I am informed that they have finally robbed all, all the few cattle, the mules and horses,
etc., that had so far escaped their thievery hands, in the previous night and so deprived me of all necessary help. Now I do not know how to survive. May God help us. Moreover, the fruit of the field have grown very little, so I do not know how we can nourish ourselves. The Lord gives, the Lord taketh. The name of the Lord be blessed, etc. [Latin]. I hope He will not abandon us. God’s will be.

Finally, to answer the last letter dated March 14, 1757: as I have said above, I have received it on the first day of this year with great comfort. It did not take more than nine months on its journey. I learn from it that the Juncker Brother has sent me another one via Rome, but it has not yet arrived, and it is getting very dangerous to entrust mail to this channel because many letters arrive in Rome, and one can easily get lost, especially if there is not immediately a good opportunity. The best way is to send the items and letters to Lord Apodaca. Simple truth/wisdom! [Latin] The Juncker Brother writes in the last letter that he is hoping for a good child delivery by the young wife at the end of mentioned month of March. I hope that it has happened that way, but I do not know what young wife he means. I assume that it is the new wife of the Juncker Brother’s son. I also do not know whether she is the same of whom you wrote me that she is pregnant. I would like to know her name and desire to receive a letter from my Honorable Nephew, etc.

The Honorable of Zürich enjoyed good festivities. May God prevent that zwiefalt [perhaps: zwiespalt = disagreements] occur in our fatherland. Nulla salus belli etc. [Latin: There is no safety in war]. The letter that the Juncker Brother wrote to the Father Johann Anthonius I have opened because it arrived sealed in the little chest. But I realized because of the recommendation that the letter had arrived very late, and because of the Father Balthasar’s blindness it would be no good because the Mexican Honorable Fathers do not like to see the missionaries with them. They say that they do not serve the province, since we do our work not for the glory of God, but for the glory of the Society. Therefore we assume that in inferno nulla sit redemptio [Latin: in Hell one cannot receive redemption]. We have to stay here as long as God wills it so. Omnia ad maiorem Dei Gloriam [Latin: All for the Greater Glory of God]. Nevertheless I am forwarding the letter so that the Father Johann Anthonius Balthasar can hear, when the letter is read to him, with how much politeness the Juncker Brother is writing to him.

I enclose a report about a miscarriage, perhaps the Juncker Brother can find a translator. Further, I am sending, in return, also a sketch of the mission house that I have built almost all by myself, although it cannot be compared to the Segesser palace. Here it costs a lot to build even simple houses, and you find very few capable building masters. In the chest you find the explanation of the fabrics [?] and another inventory that explains the virtue, power, and character of all the included items. The Juncker Brother may receive everything as an expression of my good will, although nothing is worth anything, really. affectum non effectum aspice [Latin: Look at the intention, not at the outcome]. Now, I have written a long letter. More the time does not allow me to write, although I have forgotten a number of things that could have been noted.

At the end I recommend myself most politely to the Juncker Brother with the request to send my regards to all and every relative in the name and embrace of Christ so that they do not forget me in their favors and holy prayers. I assure them that I keep them equally in my mind loyally all the time.

In particular I am sending my brotherly greeting to my most beloved Honorable Sister Elisabeth. I am highly delighted to hear of her well-being and request from the dear God that He may bless her in every respect. Likewise, I intend the same for the Honorable Sister Maria Anna, with the request that she may lend a favorable ear to the good advice by my Juncker Brother and
follow it, since everything is intended for her own profit. The Cousin Philip will give me every comfort through his good behavior.

I remain in Ures, January 23, 1758.
My Highly Born Juncker Brother’s most loyal brother

P.S.: If some other acquaintances, both from the Societas Jesu or from the Convent of Saint Ursula or others inquire about me, I am sending mil saludas [thousand greetings, Spanish]. I am greeting everyone, everyone [sic], the Father Exprovincial Father Wagemann, etc. etc. mihi, quod Dno non licet ire tuo [Latin: because it is not permitted to me to go to your Lord?]!
Highly Nobly Born Juncker Brother Pious Lord,

I hope that this letter reaches my Highly Honorable Juncker Brother along with all the other most beloved relatives. I still enjoy such bodily strength, God be praised, although I am in my seventieth year, that I can assist any time at any occasion without great efforts. I only feel some pain in the back, especially since this winter, but it does not hamper me. About one year ago I sent some news about everything that has happened in these lands, and I sent a chest along with the waggoner who arrives here once a year. In that chest are some minor things, documented by the two inventories, one in a special letter, the other contained in the chest. I do not know whether this chest has been transported with the fleet because it seems that this mentioned waggoner did not arrive in Mexico in time. Hence, I have not received any news so far. I did not want to wait any longer [which is the reason for this letter], although I expect the waggoner to arrive here [again] in ca. eight days. Tomorrow there will be a good opportunity to send this letter to Mexico. If the chest had not arrived [at the port] in time, when the fleet sailed back [to Europe], I will have even less of a chance to ship it through the hands of Lord Thomas Apodaca in Cadiz, although I had all kinds of care to aim for that goal. Although there are no particularly [valuable] things in the chest, I would not want that the chest will be delivered in a way different from how I have arranged it. It was packed with my good will and atencion [attention, Spanish]. I am sending this letter to our Father Johann Anthonius Balthasar (although, what is very regrettable, he has become blind; yet, he wrote to me recently through another hand that he had received what I had mailed through those channels as indicated, which are delicate and require much care [?]). All this pleased me very much because if the Father Johann Anthonius might become incapacitated, I would not know anyone in Mexico who knows me, or in whom I could place my confidence) so that [Neg. 51950] he can ship it to the mentioned Lord Thomas in Cadiz. The latter arrived, together with the fleet, in Veracruz with his own ship, which emboldens me to ship the chest because he had offered me his service, and because it seemed a good opportunity to me. May God grant that the delay of the waggoner has not thrown everything into the sea258 and that I receive in a short time the news, etc.

The newspapers that are being sent to me through the mentioned mercurios [messenger, half Latin, half Spanish] indicate the very lamentable condition of our dear Germany.259 Every time I receive such newspapers, I am afraid to hear bad news about my dear fatherland, which however, God be praised, has remained in its tranquil stage. May God be so graceful and exchange such bloody war with peace! That what has happened in fatherland so far, I translate already for ten years into the mirror image [Sonora]. Although the enemy (: die mentioned Seris, and recently also the
insufferable Apaches, have approached the lands of my mission four times during three months and have abducted much cattle, even more horses and mules) cannot be compared to the European soldiers, they have brought my mission and its inhabitants into such squalor, that I have found myself forced to start begging for clothing for others and myself, whereas others do not have a shirt to cover themselves. In order that we can eat, it is necessary that my Indians, like those hunters [the enemies] go hunting in the mountains for wild cows and oxen. Since the missions had been founded, we have not seen such misery. Moreover the roads and streets are so dangerous to travel that no one is safe and everyone faces the danger to fall into the enemies’ hands and to suffer from poisonous arrows and lances. The Juncker Brother could ask me whether no one makes any efforts to oppose the enemy.

As far as our monarchs, the King of Spain and the Viceroy in Mexico are concerned, they make every effort to send orders to fight against that evil. They have also established four new Praesidios, or fortresses, with new soldiers, whereas, when I had arrived, the lands had been peaceful with two praeidis. But the matter has become worse from day to day so that if God does not reveal His power in a miraculous fashion, Christianity that was implemented here with such great efforts might collapse and all the inhabitants might have to escape from their property and, may God prevent that, their Catholic faith. [Neg. 51951] My Honorable Brother! If the lower officials were to pay attention to their obligation and could not be accused of what the poet sings about (Auri sacra fames [Latin: holy lust for gold]), the royal weapons would make a better showing. sapienti pauca [Latin: a few words for the wise one!].

I do not doubt that the Fathers Procuratores have arrived in Rome in the meantime. I could send with them a short letter, but not other things since such items are not safe, especially because now the Father Juan Antonius Balthasar is now no longer in the Procurator office, and, as it usually happens [under those circumstance], he is little appreciated [now], although he has earned much and great praise here in the province. Sic transit gloria mundi [Latin: thus passes the glory of the world]. For that reason I stay quite happily in my mission, although some unhappy persons tried to destroy me, which turned out very badly for them. They had to pull away under their own disgrace without having achieved the evil that they had woven against me. Si hominibus placerem, servus Dei non essem [Latin: If I want to please people, I cannot be the servant of God]. They wanted to place the blame upon me that the mission has lost its goods, meaning what is raised in the fields, such as cattle, horses, and mules, etc., although it is well known that the enemy has robbed and killed them all. What guilt do my Indians have, who suffered from the same misfortune with their animals?

There are namely some badly behaving individuals who would like that the montesuma [Montezuma] regain his old privilege, and that they themselves could live in their former freedom again. The calamitous Angle Lord [Lucifer] meddles from every side. verum, quis ut Deus? [Latin: truly, who can be like God?].

Would the Juncker Brother greet in my name all the dear relatives thousand times and ask them that they do not forget me in their holy prayer and devotion, just as I recommend all and everyone, especially my Highly Honorable Brother, to God in my daily Mass offerings and in other prayers both for the living and the dead friends. I would like to receive good news, especially of the happy well-being of my Juncker Brother, the Honorable Grand-Children, and how and where the new Jesuit might be. Furthermore, I recommend myself to all ecclesiastical Ladies in Maria-Hilf. Although I got only once news about those who have passed away, I do not forget the Mass offering for their souls, sub conditione [Latin: under the condition] that they are blessed in God.
If some Fathers of the Jesuit Society who know me might be in the College or visit sometime my Juncker Brother, I repeat the same request that they do not forget me. Herewith I recommend myself to the ever-lasting extensive favors of my Highly Honorable Juncker Brother and beg God to keep him and all dear relatives healthy and happy for many years to come.

Ures, January 18, 1759.
My Highly Honorable Juncker Brother’s
most loyal brother
Philipp Segesser. Jhs.
Letter 74

Letter to his brother Ulrich Franz Joseph Segesser. San Miguel de Horcasitas, April 11, 1761 (Neg. 51945-51946)

Neg. ASM 51945
PA 437/589
No. 12

Highly Nobly Born Juncker Mayor Joseph,

On the occasion of the letter that I received the day before yesterday, in which Father Johann Anthonius Balthasar conveys the news which are most comforting for me that my heart beloved Juncker Brother has been Honorable with the most esteemed office and title of mayor, I cannot neglect to express my comfort and joy, which such news bring to me. I wish all the best both for my Juncker Brother and the entire family, which has risen, because of this so honorable and fortunate election, to the highest rank of public reputation. May God grant my Juncker Brother long and blessed year so that well-meaning hearts can recognize that this election [to serve] for the Honor of God and the common good has been particularly productive and that all those find comfort and prudence in the well-ordered government as much as they might have ever hoped for. I have immediately on that glorious feast day of Saint Joseph, protector and special patron saint for this land and the entire world, expressed my most dutiful thanks to the great God in my Mass offering, together with strong and ardent request that He double His protection and blessing for the government and preserve it.

What has dampened my comfort a little is that I have not received a letter from my most beloved Juncker Brother for a long time, especially not one in which he would have sent me so much desired news. On the side, I feel that the great and diverse businesses here could be of disadvantage for me. In the meantime I have completed various letters along with the chest in which my heart [perhaps an art object?] has been sent. I have received various news about it. It was kept in Mexico for more than a year. Then it was delivered to Lord Thomas Apodáca in Veracruz (who had arrived with the mercury and is a merchant in Cadiz, as I mentioned in other letters). I hold in my hands his receipt and assuring letter, in which he writes to me that it will be necessary to open it in order to know what is being shipped in it, and whether a toll has to be paid to the king, although I had indicated all items on a list and had declared that everything in the chest was my property (as one can say), not worth even four creüzer [pennies], except for the dyed three hides that could serve as a curiosity and will not be deemed as something valuable.

Nevertheless, he promised me to further the safe delivery. If they open the chest they will hardly repack it the way as it was sent off from here, hence it will be delivered in a bad shape. In a letter I have explained preliminarily what can be found in the chest. May God grant that it will arrive. For the transport until Genoa I have paid the costs, and the rest (?) will be paid as soon as the aforementioned Lord [Spanish] [Neg. 51946] Thomas Apodáca will have sent the confirmation [of the safe arrival].
I am currently at the Castle Horcasitas de San Miguel, which carries this name after its protector, or Albaseum, the Governor y Capitan general [Spanish].260 He was killed by the enemies (who destroy my mission in a most atrocious way, rob everything and murder everyone) during his journey, when he had intended to visit the province. This happened already in the first days with a poisonous arrow. One could not help him anymore. He had voluntarily entered the territory of the hostile Seris who took his life. In his last will he had determined as the Albaseum the Father Provincial of this province de Mexico [Spanish]. But because the latter is located far away, he had appointed the Rector, who is supposed to be the next in line (and I, truly, hold this office in this area) as the protector or albaseum for himself and his estates.261

The Juncker Brother does not need to be surprised about these kinds of businesses that come to me out of a lack of people one can trust in these parts of the world. Love for the neighbor and necessity require one to assume such obligations, because one cannot get much joy out of such office, which results in nothing but trouble and work. By contrast, it interferes with the own tasks. What this Honorable Coronel, Gubernator et Capitan general had saved in five years amounted to, as far as I can estimate, one hundred thousand Spanish thalers. This gives me much to do, especially in the time of these dangerous rebellions when no one can be safe on the roads, not even in the own house. The aforementioned Honorable Gubernator left behind his wife in Sevilla. He originated from the region Estramatira [Estremadura] and was called Don Juan de Mendosa. It might be that one of the Spanish ambassadors, who might stay in Lucerne, could have known him and might like to learn of these news. His last will consists of three parts: one for the church where he is buried to the honor of the the Grandfather of the most blessed Mother of God, Saint Joachim.262

The other part goes to the poor among his family. The third part is for his wife. He did not leave behind children. requiescat in pace [Latin: May he rest in peace]. He always demonstrated his great favor to me, visited me often, but he did not follow my example, when I often presented to him the regretful death. He moved into the midst of danger only equipped with his paston [baton, French] or hand-held stick, assuming that his reputation would be sufficient to overpower the Barbarian minds. I have often advised him against it, but it was of no use. qui amat periculam [Latin: he who loves danger], etc.

This year I am very much in need of everything, partly because of the hostile attacks, partly because [Neg. 51948] we cannot work in the fields out of fear of the enemies who, like robbers, unexpectedly attack the people and deal with them cruelly. Moreover, three lightening came down into my house and the church last summer in the year 1760 and created much damage. Until now I have not been able to repair the damaged house and part of the church due to a lack of food since last year I lost everything in the field. In fact, my steward writes to me that he has only four bushels of grain in the house, although many people stay there who are on the flight and hungry. Soon the newly elected Honorable Governor will arrive here with his family, etc.

May God protect and preserve such poor missioneros under His divine protection. I have no more time to write. Would the Juncker Brother greet everyone in my name, asking them that they do not forget me, just as I do not forget them, especially not my Juncker Brother. It has been almost a year that I received a letter that the Juncker Brother had written to me five years ago. After that no other letter has arrived, although I place some hope in the Fathers Procuratores [to assist with the delivery of the correspondence].

I recommend my self to the brotherly graces and beg the Almighty to preserve my Juncker Brother in the best health for many years to come.
I am writing [this letter] in Ures, which is my mission, although I am really stationed in Santo Miguel de Horcasitas

April 11, 1761.
My Highly Noble Juncker Brother’s
most loyal brother
Philipp Segesser died in Ures, Sonora, on September 28, 1762. Some scholars believe that he actually died in San Miguel de Horcasitas, but we have no further letters that would confirm the specific location either way. As far as I can tell, no one reported about Segesser’s last days, and there is no indication where he might have been buried. Ignaz Pfefferkorn (1725-after 1795), who worked as a missionary in the New World from 1754 to 1767 and later composed a major encyclopedic work on Sonora and the Jesuit contributions there (2 vols., 1794-1795), lists the following names of missionaries who were the last ones before the expulsion of all Jesuits in 1767: Benedictus Romeo in Cumuripa (from Navarra, Spain); Jakob Sedelmayr in Mátape (from Bavaria); Andreas Michel in Ures (from Bohemia); Bartholomæus Saenz in Saguariapa (from Navarra); Xavier Gonzales in Tectoripa (from Puebla, Mexico); Ildephonsus Espinosa in Caborca (from the Canary Islands); Franciscus Bauer in San Ignatius (from Prague); Michael Gestner in Saric (from Würzburg, Germany); Ludovicus Vivas in Tubutama (from Aragon); Didacus Barrera in Santa Maria Soamca (from Puebla, Mexico); Custodius Ximeno in Guebavi (from Aragon); Antonius Castro in San Xavier del Vac [Bac] (from Andalusia). Segesser, unfortunately, is not mentioned here. Obviously, the memory faded fast in that part of the world at those times. Segesser himself had mentioned Padre Eusebio Kino only once, and then but fleetingly. The Jesuit missionaries were either too busy with their daily work, or they wrote mostly scientific texts, offering encyclopedic information; hence they ignored mostly personal aspects.

This, however, makes Segesser’s letters so significant. Since he addressed his own family back home in Switzerland, he openly and often somewhat carelessly wrote about everything that had happened to him, how he felt about it, about his immediate concerns and troubles, his longing and wishes, his labors and efforts, his observations and opinions. They are remarkable documents concerning the early history of Sonora seen from a very personal perspective—private letters—and do not easily find parallels among all the voluminous Jesuit writing produced in Sonora or by those Jesuit missionaries who had been forcefully removed and transported back to Europe.

Although Segesser had arrived in Mexico in 1731 suffering from various sicknesses, having been one of the oldest missionaries ever to cross the Atlantic, at the age of 42, he enjoyed a long life, dying at the remarkable old age of 73 years. Although he had been in good health still in 1759, the growing threat by the native Indians, the loss of the farm animals, the impossibility to maintain the fields because of the military dangers, and political conflicts robbed Segesser of much of his resources and personal strength. When he died, Father Andreas Michel (1732-after 1775; from Bohemia), who had joined Segesser in Ures in 1761, gave him the last rites. We do not know where Segesser was buried. Subsequently Father Michel tried to restore the mission, but he failed as well because of the hostile conditions. Then in 1767 came the global ban and the expulsion of all Jesuits. Not surprisingly, Segesser’s life, hence his letters, were quickly forgotten. We know today, however, to appreciate them, since we can now understand their cultural, historical, religious, and political significance for the Swiss city of Lucerne, for the relationship between German speakers and Spaniards, for the history of the Jesuit Order in the New World, for the early history of Sonora, for the history of the native population in the Sonoran Desert, for the history of the fauna and flora of that region, and for the history of transcultural relations connecting the Old with the New World.
Not to mention the local history of the Segesser family in Lucerne and the vicinity in Switzerland. Above all, however, this correspondence proves to be a valuable historical document and sheds important light on the early years of Sonora and what is known as Arizona today.
Bibliography


Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel, 1854-); see also the online version at: http://germazope.uni-trier.de/Projects/DWB


Haub, Rita, Die Geschichte der Jesuiten (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2007).


Krünitz, Johann Georg, Oekonomische Encyklopaedie, oder allgemeines System der Staats= Stadt= Haus= u. Landwirthschaft (Berlin: Pauli, 1773-1858).


Millones Fugueroa, El saber de los jesuitas, historias naturales y el Nuevo Mundo, ed. Luis Millones Fugueroa and Domingo Ledeyma. Textos y estudios coloniales y de la Independencia, 12 (Frankfurt: Vervuert; Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2005).


Villalba Peárez, Enrique, Consecuencias educativas de la expulsión de los Jesuitas de América (Madrid: Biblioteca del Instituto Antonio de Nebrija de Estudios sobre la Universidad, 2003).


Endnotes


4. This is entitled: *Spanisch Mucken Pulver*, or: Spanish Mosquito Powder; the author does not provide a name, but he characterizes himself as a sincere, honorable, and, above all, patriotic German who appeals to his fellow countrymen to take up arms against the Spanish threat and the poisonous influence of the Jesuit order. For an online copy, today held at the Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg, Germany, under the call number 02/IV.13.4.161angeb.04, see at: http://digbib.bibliothek.uni-augsburg.de/311/02_IV_13_4_0161_04.pdf. It is also identified in the online catalogue of seventeenth-century German publications: VD17 23:233447L.


7. This represents, of course, the more popular view of what the Jesuits were all about. As John O’Malley, “The Society of Jesus,” *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. R. Po-chia Hsia. Blackwell Companions to European History (2004; Malden, MA, Oxford, and Victoria, Australia:
Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 223-36, correctly underlines, “the Jesuits’ famous ‘Fourth Vow’ was not an oath of Counter-Reformation loyalty to the pope but a vow of mobility expressive of their desire to be missionaries in imitation of the evangelizing St. Paul” (224). Later, however, O’Malley also admits that by 1550 the Jesuits specifically targeted Protestantism as one of their major combative opponent (230).

8. This perspective is primarily pursued by Cushner, Why Have You Come Here?, 13-29. He appropriately captures the major approach pursued by the missionaries in the title to his fourth chapter: “Conquest, Pacification, and Conversion” (71).


15. See Bernd Hausberger, Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa, 172-73. Havier was supposed to travel to the Philippines, but since he wrote his letter from Mexico only two years before his death, he probably never reached his ultimate goal.


27. The exploration of the work and contributions by German-language Jesuit missions in the Southwest has begun already several decades ago, see Bernd Hausberger, *Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa*, 1995).


30. As I will explain later, three letters surfaced only in the last stage of our project, which made it impossible for me to compare the transcription with the original in the Lucerne archive.

31. This is a bound copy of his letters under the title *Sammlung der von R. P. Philippo Segesser De Brunegg Soc. Jesu.: Aus America nacher Lucern geschickten Brieffen von 1729te Jahr*. State Archive Lucerne, PA 437/91. The copyist only selected some of Segesser’s letters. We do not know
his/her name or the date when this collection was put together.

32. The novitiate is the period of two years in preparation for the full entry into the Order, and only if the young novice then passed the required examination was he allowed to enter the Jesuit Order. Since 1578 the Novitiate of the Upper German province was in Landsberg (until 1773). See Ferdinand Strobel SJ, Der Regularklerus: Die Gesellschaft Jesu in der Schweiz. Helvetia Sacra, VII (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1976), 54. The candidate was to give his first three vota at that time, and he was allowed to give the last votum, the so-called profession, only after completed studies and years of further testing in the practical life. See Strobel, 51-52.


36. For an excellent historical overview of what happened there, and why the Spaniards sent the military expedition into a territory contested by both Spaniards and French, see the online site at: http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0300/frameset_reset.html?http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0300/stories/0301_0113.html (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).


38. Staatsarchiv Luzern, PA 437/587, a typoscript copy (beginning with his arrival in San Xavier del Bac, today outside of Tucson, letter dated December 15, 1731; then also PA 437/591, which is a photocopy of a much more comprehensive number of pages that are no longer included in 587).
There is no name attached to this file; the translator did not identify him/herself. But from letters, also kept in the files in the Staatsarchiv, it is clear that Wolfgang Lindig, Professor in Frankfurt a. M., Germany, was responsible for the transcription, or had at least taken on the responsibility. In a letter dated June 6, 1972, he confirms that he would return to Lucerne to do the transcription, and he requests that the photos of the letters be sent to Dr. Raymond H. Thompson, Director of the Arizona State Museum (PA 437/595). In a letter dated September 30, 1974, however, in which he complains about not having been paid for the transcription work, he also indicates that a Dr. Walter had carried that burden altogether (PA 437/595). The first four letters, however, dated 1731, 1733, 1734, and one undated, had originally been transcribed by a Dr. Hillach. On August 4, 1975 (PA 437/595) he reports that the job has finally been completed. On October 17, 1975 (ibid.), he also mentions that a project to have those letters translated into English has already been started by Mr Daniel S. Matson, who apparently did not get very far. Something must have gone wrong, however, since the list of letters transcribed by Hillach indicates that he worked only on a specific selection of letters, beginning with the one dated December 15, 1731, and ending with the letter dated June 27, 1742. Subsequently, Dr. Walter took over again and worked on a selection of letters dated as late as January 23, 1758.


44. For some biographical information, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Xavier.

45. For a concise chronology regarding the college in Lucerne, see Strobel, Der Regularlerus, 114-33.

47. Heiko Schmuck, *Philipp Segesser SJ*, 23-25, with the relevant research literature there.


50. For modern-day procedures within the Jesuit Order, or Society of Jesus, which have, however, not changed much, see http://www.jesuitvocation.org/information/apply.shtml (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009). Landsberg is located straight south of Augsburg and west of Munich on the river Lech.

51. Neuburg is a city due west of Ingolstadt, on the river Danube, northeast of Augsburg and northwest of Munich.

52. Caspar/Kaspar Stiger was born on October 21, 1695 in Kobelwald, Canton St. Gallen, Switzerland. Before he joined the Jesuit Order on October 9, 1725, he had been a priest in Montlingen. In May 1729 he left for the New World and arrived there, together with Segesser, in 1731. Stiger then went to Carichic to the very old Father Joseph Neumann and learned the language of the Tarahumarans. After Neumann’s death on May 4, 1732, Stiger took over his mission. In October 1733 he was also called to the Pimería Alta to San Xavier del Bac. A few months later he had to help the sick Segesser return to Guévavi. After a short time in Tubutama in 1736, Stiger moved to San Ignacio and stayed there until his death on July 27, 1762. It is claimed that he spoke Pima, or Tohono O’Odham, with such a strong Swiss accent that no one among the natives could understand him except those at his mission. See Hausberger, *Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa*, 318-22.


58. Philipp A. von Segesser’s modernized reproduction concludes with the author’s signature, which is missing, however, in the manuscript held at the State Archive in Lucerne, where the report is only signed with the common line “Unwürtigester diener und Missionary gemelter Mission etc.” (most humble servant and missionary of the above mentioned mission). Indeed, this is a copy of the original, and the hand also proves to be different from the one we are used to in Philipp Segesser’s authentic letters. Another copy is held in the Klosterarchiv Einsiedeln, MR 8. I am grateful to Stefan Jäggi from the State Archive in Lucerne for pointing this out to me.


60. *La relación de Philipp Segesser: Correspondencia familiar de un misionero en Sonora en el año de 1737*, trans. Armando Hopkins Durazo (Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico: n.p., 1991). This is, however, only based on Treutlein’s English translation, though expanded with numerous footnotes and valuable explanations.


66. Since the Middle Ages, “Juncker” was the title for a young nobleman, like “Fräulein” (terribly misunderstood in US media and public entertainment), in clear contrast to ‘Senior’ within a dynasty. Later it developed into a term for a nobleman in general, irrespective of the age relationships. In some contexts the term could also be employed for ironic purposes, though that is not the case here at all. See Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Vol. 4. 2, edited by Moriz Heyne (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1877), 2399-402. Segesser addressed both his father and his brother, or any other male member of his family who deserved respect, with this term.
67. The relevant German and Swiss dictionaries do not provide an answer what this term might mean. I have found only one reference in the Schweizerisches Idiotikon: Wörterbuch der schweizerdeutschen Sprache, begun by Friedrich Staub and Ludwig Tobler. Vol. 4, by A. Bachmann, R. Schoch, et al. (Frauenfeld: Verlag von J. Huber, 1901), 1331: “das Seil, womit der Bind-Baum des Heuwagens fest angezogen wird, gew. aber Wellen-Seil genannt“ (the rope with which the Bind-Baum [a kind of a mast in the center] of the hay waggon is pulled tightly, normally, however, called Wellen-Seil). Segesser will use this term quite often. It might well be a little cloth or fabric with a picture of a saint, of Christ, or, most likely, of the Virgin Mary sewed onto it. The term “bindband” appears in Frühneuhochdeutsches Wörterbuch, ed. Ulrich Goebel and Oskar Reichmann, vol. 4 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 430, but there only in the meaning of a rope to tie up an animal (“Band zum Anbinden [von Tieren]”). The best bet would be to render this phrase as “scapular,” see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scapular (last accessed on Nov. 24, 2009). The scapular is defined there in the following way: “The devotional scapular typically consists of two small (usually rectangular) pieces of cloth, wood or laminated paper, a few inches in size which may bear religious images or text. These are joined by two bands of cloth and the wearer places one square on the chest, rests the bands one on each shoulder and lets the second square drop down the back.”

68. Rathausen was a community of beguines (freely encloistered women who had not taken a vow, yet lived a life dedicated to God) in the vicinity of Lucerne, originally founded in 1245, who then in 1251 accepted the rules of the Cistercian Order. It was dissolved in 1848 by fiat of the Swiss parliament, see http://www.ssbl.ch/kloster-rathausen.html (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

69. Segesser often composed his letters while being in a rush, so he tends to resort to this abbreviation quite often. In other words, I have not simply left out any texts when I reproduce his “etc.” (originally always spelled “ec.”).

70. Freiburg im Breisgau is located in the southwest of modern-day Germany near the Swiss and the French border, at the western limit of the Black Forest.

71. Term is unexplainable so far. It does not seem to be a common word in the Swiss dialect (no entry for it in the Schweizerisches Idiotikon), and it is not listed as a place or town in Switzerland, see Geographisches Lexikon der Schweiz, ed. Charles Knapp and Maurice Borel. Deutsche Ausgabe, ed. by Heinrich Brunner, vol. 1 (Neuenburg: Verlag von Gebrüder Attinger, 1902).

72. Possibly, the author refers to Italian-Swiss merchants, since the term “völschhendel” could either mean ‘false’ (from ‘valsch’) or Italian (from ‘welsch’).

73. Segesser likes to use this phrase to indicate his submissive attitude toward his parents. He does not express thereby his stage of innocence, naivité, or the like. In English there does not seem to be a good substitute for this adjective or adverb, since ‘childlike’ or ‘childish’ carries a very different meaning. Prof. Werner S. Zimmt, University of Arizona, correctly suggested to render this adverb or adjective as ‘filial.’ I am very grateful for this alternative phrase.

74. These words must have been left out because of haste or oversight.
75. The Procurator is the father who runs the finances in a house, or in a province, see Strobel, Die Gesellschaft Jesu, 54.

76. This might well be a misspelling for recognitio, ‘renewed recognition’ or ‘renewed examination.’

77. The name denotes the person’s origin in Appenzell, northeastern Switzerland.

78. Ruswil is a small community in the Canton Lucerne between Lucerne and Grosswangen. It is the same place where the Ruswil Society was founded in 1839 that aimed at calling back the Jesuits into the Canton Lucerne (the Jesuits had been banned globally since 1767; see the introduction), see Geographisches Lexikon der Schweiz, vol. 4 (1906), 288.

79. Sauter, Die oberdeutschen Jesuitenkirchen, 76-77.

80. This subordinate clause remains highly obscure.

81. The Rector is the principle officer of a Jesuit school, a college.

82. Sursee is a small town in the heart of the Canton Lucerne, twenty-four kilometers northwest of Lucerne, located not far from Ruswil straight to the north, on the northwestern end of the Sempach Lake, Geographisches Lexikon der Schweiz, vol. 5 (1908), 735-38.

83. Sauter, Die oberdeutschen Jesuitenkirchen, 131-35.

84. Here we have the first indication that Philipp Segesser believes that he will be sent into the mission somewhere in the world. See his following explanations.

85. Segesser does not specify yet what he expects, whether he might work with Protestants, non-Christians, heathens, etc.

86. He means the various types of rye, wheat, barley, or oat.

87. He implies that the corn is blooming too early.


89. The author here refers to the spiritual salvation of the Indians or other heathens outside of Europe.

90. The meaning of this sentence remains rather obscure because both the term “Bindband” and the grammatical structure in the original are fragmentary.

91. This is simply a laxative, but it might have been taken to induce vomiting or defecating, see Schweizerisches Idiotikon, vol. 3 (1892), 1546.

93. I could not find an entry for this term in any dictionary, but the word *Harzkappe* exists, which might have a very similar meaning, such as a short coat without sleeves, like a cape. Sometimes it refers to the priest’s vestment, see Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Vol. 4, 2 (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1877), 522.

94. This is Philipp’s maternal grandfather.

95. This appears to have been the last letter to his father before his death. Curiously, there are no subsequent letters in which Philipp Segesser would comment on his father’s passing away. Most likely, here we face a lacuna (gap), or loss, because it seems most improbable that this young man would not have expressed any grief at that occasion, whereas otherwise he formulated his emotions so freely.


97. Segesser might have suffered from chronic intestinal colic.

98. Text not clearly understandable because of the illegible handwriting.

99. This passage reflects a gap left by Schmuck in his transcription. Again, only the careful study of the original manuscripts can do justice to the task of translating these letters.

100. Located in Franconia in the north of Bavaria, northwest of Erlangen and southwest of Bamberg, straight east of Würzburg.

101. I could not find Gastzell on any map. Perhaps Segesser meant ‘Gutenzell,’ which is situated straight north of Ellwangen, indeed in a distance of two hours (both south of Ulm).

102. Idiomatic expression to underscore the near impossibility of accomplishing this task.

103. The meaning very unclear since Segesser uses only a sentence fragment.

104. He is probably expecting some financial support to advertise the Mass.

105. The meaning is not quite clear.

106. Philipp understands only too well that his father is getting weaker and can no longer write himself.

107. In the archival collection in the State Archive of Lucerne, this letter is numbered ‘20,’ fitting into the chronological order, whereas the photocopies place the two letters in Latin together.

108. He means, of course, America, the New World, not specifically the West Indies, which would be the Caribbean today.

110. Here the author switches from future tense to simple past. The translation has to copy that to avoid an extensive rewriting of the text to put it into the right chronological sequence.

111. Unclear idiomatic phrase, perhaps referring to “ribe” = to rub with a wooden piece female blouses, instead of ironing them. See *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, vol. 6 (1909), 53-61. We should, however, consider the meaning ‘rip’ (68-69), which might refer to a relic and which would make considerably more sense in this context.

112. The author must have made a leap in his thoughts because he is suddenly talking about grapes.

113. The *matins* is part of the canonical hours, or the Liturgy of Hours, in a monastery, and traditionally it was prayed sometime between midnight and early in the morning; here probably referring to the time of ca. five or six a.m. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canonical_hours (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

114. This is a strong root and herbal liquor (40%), originally invented in Danzig/Gdansk in 1598; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goldwasser (last accessed on Aug. 1, 2009). Segesser only uses the standard phrase “Gold Water” (“gold wasser”).

115. Today the capital of Ecuador.

116. He uses the term ‘mission’ for ‘service,’ but he clearly means the latter.

117. Perhaps: Noble feather. The term is not included in the *Schweizerisches Idiotikon* or in other major reference works, such as the famous Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universallexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste* (1732-1754; Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1961-1964)

118. Idiomatic phrase: don’t take them for granted.

119. Here he refers to his serious case of sea-sickness.

120. He means the voyage on the river Guadalquivir.

121. The meaning of this bean is explained online as follows: “Filipinos traditionally wore the seeds of the Ignatius bean as amulets to protect themselves from disease. Jesuits brought the plant from the Philippines to Europe in the 17th century and, it is believed, named it ignatia, or St. Ignatius bean, after the founder of the Jesuit order, Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The fruit has been called monkey apple because monkeys sometimes eat it. In Java and Malaysia the seeds were extracted and used as dart poisons for blowguns and in curare. Ignatius’ beans were frequently used as a cheap strychnine substitute for Strychnos nux vomica, because they have similar actions and alkaloidal composition. Once recommended as a remedy for cholera, Ignatius bean is used to treat fever and..."
acute emotional and mental afflictions such as hysteria, insomnia, and depression. Ignatius beans are used chiefly as a homeopathic remedy, administered in very small doses because of extreme toxicity. Improper dosage—internal consumption of as little as a fraction of an ounce—can result in muscle spasms and painful convulsions and even death by asphyxiation” (http://www.herbs2000.com/herbs/herbs_ignatius_bean.htm, last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

122. These seem to be little pieces of textile on which pictures can be sewed with pearls. Perhaps ‘votive images.’

123. A bezoar is a matter found in the gastrointestinal area, usually in the stomach, normally consisting of a ball of hair, combined with non-biological matter, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bezoar (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009). Segesser describes apparently accurately what the common myth was at his time concerning bezoars. Ignaz Pfefferkorn includes an extensive report about the bezoar, emphasizing that it is normally found in East India in the stomachs of goats, whereas in Peru it is extracted from the stomachs of the alpacas, guanacos, and vicuñas (all camelid animals). In Sonora, according to his account, the bezoar commonly grows in the stomachs of deer and mountain goats, animals that live in the drought region populated by the Papagos, or Tohono O’Odhams. Pfefferkorn believes that the bezoar helps against depression and snake poison (Beschreibung der Landschaft Sonora, 1794/1996, 151-52),

124. Perhaps he had encountered some Arabs living in Sevilla.

125. Segesser might have wanted to write ‘palmum,’ whereas ‘polma’ (nominative) or ‘polmam’ (accusative) does not exist in Latin.

126. Wallis (in German), or Valais (in French), is a Canton in the Southwest of Switzerland. It is not clear what Segesser has in mind when he refers to ‘Vallesia,’ which does not exist as the name of a town.

127. Both are types of ships, but it is unclear what he specifically means with Azogues. Most likely, the term refers to a Spanish ship used to ship ores, specifically mercury, across the Atlantic.


129. He wants to avoid the possible confusion with his own name, apart from the fact that he refers to a Franciscan monk.

130. He only says: my letters, but since the sentence indicates where the brother is to address the letters to, he must mean the opposite—the brother’s letters.

131. The meaning here is not clear.

132. This harbor is located on the embankment of the Guadalete river near Cadiz, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Puerto_de_Santa_Maria (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

133. Shrovetide is another term for Mardi Gras.
134. He means some kind of baked bread filled with sage. “Meislein” is the diminutive of ‘meise’ = ‘tit’ or ‘titmouse,’ a little bird.

135. I can only guess what he really means here; it is, for sure, some kind of bread.

136. Unclear whether to Cadiz or from Cadiz, since the next sentence indicates that the postage is already paid for the whole way to Genoa.

137. Although the text says “gemust” = ‘as forced to,’ the context requires the reading of ‘gewust’ = ‘had known.’

138. Note the irony.

139. South-German town on the Danube.

140. Tumbaga is an alloy of gold and copper; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumbaga.

141. This section proves to be extremely difficult and contains no coherent sentence, as far as I can tell.

142. Probably a book about the dead saint as reported by the widow, or from her perspective.

143. He refers to a collection of Swiss saints’ lives, such as Helvetia Sancta, H. Schweitzer-Land, seu Paradisus sanctorum Helvetiae florum; Das ist, Ein Heiliger Lustiger Blumen-Garten, und Paradeiss der Heiligen by the Carthucian monk Henricus Murer. 2nd ed. (St. Gallen: Fürstliche Buchdruckerey, 1751). The original edition appeared in Lucerne in 1648, published by David Hautten.


145. An arroba is a measuring unit for ca. 11 kg., or ca. 23 pounds. Segesser equates it with 25 pounds.

146. See Hörsch and Bannwart, Luzerner Pfarr- und Weltklerus 1700-1800, 380.

147. Segesser refers to some private matter that must have happened back in the College, combining it with some puns that we can no longer properly understand.

148. The most obscure syntax finds its explanation in highly satirical language. Segesser would have liked to welcome a boy, who could have carried his own name.

149. Perhaps he thinks of life as a comedy, or life as a stage.

150. Despite the term ‘Indian,’ he certainly means ‘Atlantic.’
151. The numbering of the negatives seem to have gotten confused here, but I could not verify the exact sequence; instead I rely here on the original from which I translated the text.

152. Note the irony in his expression, meaning: it was stolen.

153. A special kind of ship.

154. Some kind of wind.

155. Perhaps their armarios = pieces of furniture, perhaps cabinets, or portable closets.

156. Unclear whether Segesser refers to the shipwrecked (Spanish) sailor, which would make sense considering the confession in Sevilla, or to a member of the English ship (because of his wife).

157. The Mercedarians, or the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy, are a monastic order founded in 1218, particularly with the goal of finding ways to liberate Christian slaves either by means of money or even by substituting for them with the own person. See http://orderofmercy.org/sitemap/ (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

158. Philip Romolo Neri founded the society of secular priests, or Congregation of the Oratory, in 1575, intended for taking care of the poor and weak, and to minister to pilgrims, first in Rome, then everywhere else, including teaching, doing parish work, and supporting the community at large, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Neri (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009). See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oratory_of_Saint_Philip_Neri (last accessed on Aug. 9, 2009).

159. Bethlehemites, or Belemites, were members of an order founded by Pedro de Betancourt who had travelled to Guatemala and established a hospital there for the poor in 1654. The order was officially approved first by the Spanish king in 1672 and then in 1673 by the Pope, see online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethlehemites (last accessed on Aug. 9, 2009). I would like to express my gratitude to my colleague Peter Dinzelbacher, University of Vienna, for help identifying all these Catholic orders.

160. This is a clear swipe at the Spanish Baroque architecture. Ellwangen an der Jagst is a German town in the eastern part of modern-day Baden-Württemberg with a famous Baroque basilica, Schönenberg, erected in 1639, but much simpler and more serene in appearance than most Spanish churches; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellwangen (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

161. This is a mysterious passage. Did he possibly write up that account in the form of a play for later presentation on a stage? The name or word of “Haal” does not make any sense here. “Vakanz” means ‘break from school’ (Schweizerisches Idiotikon, vol 1, 1881, 732). Perhaps Segesser wrote down the account about the Lady of Guadalupe when he was at home, since the verb “prohcetiert” could mean either ‘project,’ ‘processed,’ or ‘produced.’ It would not be uncommon for a Jesuit to create a school drama for pedagogical purposes, see Jean Marie Valentin, Le Théâtre des Jésuites dans les pays de langue allemande (1554-1680): Salut des âmes et ordre des cites. 3 vols. Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe 1: Deutsche Literatur und Germanistik, 255 (Bern and Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1978); id., Le Théâtre des Jésuites dans les pays de langue allemande:

162. Johann Anton Balthasar was born on April 10, 1697, in Lucern, Switzerland, as the son of the city’s mayor. On October 1712 he joined the Jesuit Order in Italy, and went to the New World in 1719, but stayed in the center of Mexico for quite some time, serving for a long time as Rector of the province, and from 1750 to 1753 as Provincial of the Mexican province. Following Padre Kino’s ideas and model, he pushed very hard for the expansion of the missionary network far into the north and the northwest in order to establish a land connection between the Mexican and the California province. He died on April 23, 1763. See Hausberger, Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa, 107-21.

163. Segesser drops this clause and does not return to it specifically.

164. See the brief biographical outline in my introduction.

165. In all likelihood he means the jojoba fruit, or nut, from the jojoba shrub; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jojoba (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).

166. “Gütsch” is a small round hill, often associated with local names. But here another meaning comes into play: bed in the living room, or in a corner of the room, sometimes a kind of couch. See Schweizerisches Idiotikon, vol. 2 (1885), 563-65.

167. This is the second use of this idiomatic phrase, see above. Still, its meaning remains unclear.

168. He refers to this book later again (1753, no date, see below), repeating his request again.

169. Perhaps a powder against headaches (cranium = skull).

170. He uses a very old word for this flower, “nügelein,” which was Middle High German for ‘carnation,’ or ‘dianthus.’ in Latin. See Grimms Wörterbuch.

171. The archive in the Arizona State Museum presumably holds all the photo negatives of the originals. It is possible, as I hope, that the entire collection of letters indeed was photographed, but something got confused in the process since this letter is not included in the transcript created by Schmuck. I could identify at least two photo negatives, 5214 (for the last page) and 5213 (the preceding one) of this letter from December 15, 1731. But 5212 and the lower numbers belong to a completely different letter (May 7, 1734 etc.). Hausberger, Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa, lists this letter (if not another one) as no. 47, but identifies as having been written in San Ignacio. He looked at the photocopy in the Bancroft Library, BLB Berkeley, M-M 1805.

172. Today, the old term “Pima” for the people and their language is regarded as inappropriate, since the original terms are used instead. It is an Uto-Aztecan language, split into two dialects, “Tohono O’odham” (“Papago”) and “Akimel O’odham” (“Pima”); see online at:

173. Segesser put this and other underlinings into the letter himself.


175. For biographical information on Franz (?) Josef Ranutius, see Waltraud Hörsch and Josef Bannwart (†), *Luzerner Pfarr- und Weltklerus 1700-1800*, 380.

176. I believe that he is talking about a smoking pipe; hence the subsequent statement because he is embarrassed that someone might find out his little weakness.

177. He would have needed this iron to treat his vestments and other clothing.

178. Perhaps a form of powder to lighten a fire.

179. Segesser is embarrassed about his mundane concerns as a farmer.

180. A pun on his own name, see above.

181. Probably a waffle iron, as suggested by the German transcriber (PA 437, 591).

182. Some of these are recipes for local baked goods typical of the Lucerne region.

183. There is a contradiction here, which Segesser did not notice himself.

184. In the original he uses a much stronger term, “güllen” = fluid manure.

185. The term is normally spelled as ‘muth’ or ‘muthe,’ see Johann Georg Krüütz, *Oekonomische Encyklopaedie, oder allgemeines System der Staats= Stadt= Haus= u. Landwirthschaft* (Berlin: Pauli, 1773-1858), now consult the online version at: http://www.kruenitz1.uni-trier.de/ (see under ‘muthe. 2†’).

186. This is not at all true, Segesser just started at the top of a new page, but he might have been tired.

187. Unfortunately, something has gone wrong in the numbering, either of the negatives or even of the originals in the archive. But the dating of the letter seems to confirm that this letter is properly placed in the current sequence. See also the list of letters from Segesser in the bibliography by Bernd Hausberger, *Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa*, 303, no. 54.
188. Keller was born on Nov. 11, 1702 in Olmütz/Olomouc, Moravia, and died in 1759 in Santa María Suamca. In 1743 he made the very first effort to explore the area where the Hopis lived, but he faced enormous hostility, lost his horses, and had to walk back to Sonora. In 1744 he created a map of the Pimería Alta. See Bernd Hausberger, Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa, 198-202.

189. The German word for this tree is *Senesbaum*, the Latin word is *cassia senna*, and in English the tree is known as *Alexandrian Senna*, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senna_alexandrina (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009). The leaves have a laxative affect.

190. This could mean either that Segesser talked to his Indians in San Xavier in German, or that he taught them Christianity in the way how he was used to from his German province in Europe.

191. Wordplay on ‘sie’ [them] and ‘vil’ [much] which cannot be rendered into English.

192. This is the dragon fruit, a cactus species, especially of the *genus Hylocereus* (sweet pitayas), sometimes also called ‘strawberry pear. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitaya (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009).


194. Here the term implies, metaphorically speaking, a symbolic connection between Segesser and his family back home.

195. Segesser’s irony here turns to sarcasm.

196. This is a “strait off the northern coast of Cuba and the Sabana-Camagüey Archipelago and south of the Great Bahama Bank. It is approximately 100 miles (161 km) long and 15 miles (24 km) wide.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Bahama_Channel (last accessed on Oct. 10, 2009)

197. In the original he uses the term ‘danger,’ but since he refers to the gifts, he can only mean that they were somewhat damaged.


199. City in South Tyrol, on the river Adige, hence in the province of Alto Adige. Trento was also the town where the famous Council of Trento took place between 1545 and 1563, which cemented the Catholic Counter-Reformation and laid the foundation for the enormous expansion of the Catholic Church for the next hundreds of years.

200. In northern Europe, the weather in the month of April is notoriously unstable.

201. Literally: around my neck, se he is afraid of being killed by them.

202. Segesser writes “Eigenschaft,” which would actually mean ‘character,’ ‘individual condition,’ but he seems to have meant the word “Eidgenossenschaft” = Switzerland (Confoederatio Helvetica).

204. This is only an approximate translation since the sentence is not quite clear, obviously fragmentary.

205. Idiomatic phrase, meaning that he gave it away for free.

206. Ures is one of the oldest settlements in Sonora, founded by the Jesuit Father Francisco Paris in 1644, known as San Miguel de Ures since 1665; see http://www.e-local.gob.mx/wb2/ELOCAL/EMM_sonora/ (last accessed on Aug. 23, 2009).

207. Idiomatic phrase: to put his hand into it.

208. As so often, Segesser enjoys sarcastic comments, meaning the very opposite here.

209. Segesser’s syntax here falls apart, and I have tried my best to simplify and to clarify his meaning, staying as close to the original as possible.

210. This is a small coach pulled by one horse.

211. England fought against Spain for the free maritime trade with South America since 1739. More important, England was drawn into the long war for the Austrian Succession from 1740 to 1748. In the Battle of Toulon, Feb. 22-23, 1744, for instance, the British Mediterranean fleet was defeated by the Spanish fleet, assisted by the French. What concerns us most, however, was the so-called War of Jenkin’s Ears from 1740 to 1748 in which British and Spanish naval forces fought against each other in the Caribbean Sea, or the West Indies, for supremacy and control of the trading routes. “The last naval operations of the war took place in the West Indies, where the Spaniards, who had for a time been treated as a negligible quantity, were attacked on the coast of Cuba by a British squadron under Sir Charles Knowles. They had a naval force under Admiral Reggio at Havana. Each side was at once anxious to cover its own trade, and to intercept that of the other. Capture was rendered particularly desirable to the British by the fact that the Spanish homeward-bound convoy would be laden with the bullion sent from the American mines. In the course of the movement of each to protect its trade, the two squadrons met on 1 October 1748 in the Bahama Channel. The action was indecisive when compared with the successes of British fleets in later days, but the advantage lay with Sir Charles Knowles. He was prevented from following it up by the speedy receipt of the news that peace had been made in Europe by the powers, who were all in various degrees exhausted.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_the_Austrian_Succession#The_West_Indies; see also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_Jenkins%27_Ear (both last accessed on August 23, 2009). See also Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and the Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (2007; London: Penguin, 2008).

212. He only knows, so it seems, the Spanish words for it, no longer the German: ‘Blumenkohl’

213. He kind of repeats himself here.
214. Advanced German high school, the graduation from which, based on a serious exam, represents, still today, the basis for the university study.

215. Another highly ironic statement, maybe a swipe at the Spaniards again.

216. This error by Segesser is not recorded in Schmuck’s transcription.

217. The context suggests to translate “ris” that way, but not even the *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, Vol. 6, 1909, helps us here. “Ris” had also the meaning of a wooden gadget to connect a plough to the animals (1374-75), which could imply ‘ream’ in the sense of ‘pile’ or ‘ream.’ “Ris” as ‘giant’ (1355-55) could also help. “Ris” as ‘branch’ or as ‘rice’ take us far afield. Local sources in Lucerne orally inform me that ‘ris’ also means a ‘pile of cards,’ or a ‘deck of cards.’

218. “klecken” as a verb also represents a problem. In the *Schweizerisches Idiotikon*, Vol. 3, 1895, we find only the meaning of ‘to burst,’ ‘to break open,’ ‘to crack’ (639-41).

219. Personally, I must admit, I could very much sympathize with Segesser while translating his letters and preparing the manuscript for publication.

220. Old measuring unit, ca. one yard.

221. This is a rather radical rewriting of Segesser’s long-winded sentence, but the meaning is still very much the same.

222. As a reminder, Segesser was born on Sept. 1, 1689, so he had reached the age of 60 just a few days before he composed this letter.

223. Segesser refers to some legal case, perhaps a lawsuit that involves the honor of the entire family, or of his own name.

224. Idiomatic phrase: the guests do not pay a penny.

225. He means that he would have nothing to show for all his long-term efforts, totally impoverished in material and in religious regards.

226. Historical reference to the Hapsburgian/German King (since 1486) and Emperor (1508) Maximilian who was prevented from traveling to Rome for his imperial coronation by the Venetians, so he settled for Trento as coronation site. See Hermann Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I: Das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*. 5 vols (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1971-1986).

227. Here the word ‘ris’ assumes a very different meaning, see above, but it obviously had multivalent contents.

228. In a letter to Dr. H. von Segesser, May 19, 1975, Prof. Lindig speculates that Castle Platen might be Castle Blatten near Oberriet (PA437/595), that is, in the vicinity of St. Gallen near the Lake
Constance. That castle was ruined only in 1799 when the French and Austrian troops clashed in that area. Subsequently the ruin was quarried by the local population; see: www.swisscastles.ch/StGallen/blatten_d.html (last accessed on Aug. 24, 2009.

229. Herold is the carrier of the banner, hence a military person of higher rank.

230. He really means, to subjugate them, as the following sentences clearly indicate.

231. Typically for Segesser, he simply drops the topic of the wars by the Seris and continues with asking his brother about the affairs at home.

232. Segesser regards the lightning almost like a living creature, perhaps as an emissary of the devil.

233. Segesser apparently refers to some kind of graduation ceremonies at the College back home.

234. Dr. Ray Thompson, former director, discovered a copy of this letter in the collection of the Arizona State Museum only months after I had completed my research in the State Archive of Lucerne, which made it impossible to identify the number of the original letter in the local file.

235. In the original it says: for these delightful news, but Segesser simply switched the position of the adverb, causing some confusion.

236. This is a kind of afterthought, also grammatically, and could reflect Segesser’s insecurity regarding the conflicting information contained in the two letters.

237. He clearly underscores his friends, though he probably means his relatives.

238. Meaning: he is providing the money for nuns to buy the necessary habits to join a convent.

239. Indeed, the number of mistakes is large, and one needs a bit of fantasy to figure out what words Segesser might have meant here in this passage.

240. Here is a great example for the countless challenges in translating Segesser’s German. He writes “würzHaus,” which I first mistook as ‘house of roots’ (= Wurtz, or Wurzel = root; Haus = house), but he really meant to write “Wirtshaus” = tavern.

241. Segesser mistakes Ruhen for a Czech Jesuit. In reality, he originated from Borsum, a small northern German rural community near the city of Hildesheim. He was born on June 16, 1718, in Borsum and joined the Jesuits on October 22, 1736. In 1748 he was ordained as priest. In 1749 he traveled from Paderborn to Cadiz, and in 1750 to Veracruz, Mexico. He at first stayed with the sick Father Vicente Ripoll in Jalapa, and continued his journey only after the latter had passed away on September 7, 1750. Since the end of June 1751 he lived in Sonoita, and was killed in November of the same year. See Hausberger, Jesuiten aus Mitteleuropa, 285. The citizens of the modern Borsum (near Hildesheim) have organized over the last decade or so immense financial commitments, collecting considerable sums of money to have the chapel rebuilt where Ruhen was killed in Sonoita, Mexico, which is today just south of the US border. His grave is located next to the new
chapel, and a plaque reminds us today of his missionary contribution.

242. Idiomatic expression: very quickly.

243. Segesser increasingly resorts to this expression, which might also be a bit topical, hence a rhetorical device.

244. As above, I received this letter only much later after my research in Lucerne had already been completed, which made it impossible to identify the specific file number of the original in the archive.

245. He means the history of the Jesuit order in the Bavarian province by Ignaz Agricola, which interested Segesser of course quite a lot because he had spent a long time there as a novice and later as a teacher. The title was: Historia Provinciae Societatis Jesu Germaniae Superioris quinque primas annorum complexa decades: Quinque Primas Annorum Complexa Decades Pars Prima; Pars Secunda, Ab Anno 1591 ad 1600 (1727; Augsburg: Schlüter und Happach, 1729).

246. Idiomatic phrase: he is rich and lives comfortably. The transcription of the negative that would follow here was missing, but I could rely on the original in the State Archive in Lucerne.

247. She must have married, as Segesser refers to an often cited passage in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, 7:9: “But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

248. In all likelihood Segesser refers to sexual customs that he cannot control and finds despicable, yet does not dare to approach in specific terms here.

249. The Visitator is a kind of inspector sent by the Jesuit generals to the provinces for observations and reporting.

250. This is the third letter that was discovered as a photograph in the Arizona State Museum very late in the translation process; hence it was not possible to verify the call number of the original in the State Archive in Lucerne.

251. Segesser’s syntax heavily falls apart here, since he combines numerous subordinate clauses, drops logical sequences, implies more than he says, and draws heavily from his usual rhetorical language. He is basically saying the same as he has said numerous times addressing his brother and others, assuring them of his love, his concern to be remembered, and expressing his worries that they all pray for each other.

252. He refers to the design for a new building in Lucerne which he would, of course, not be able to see with his own eyes, once erected; hence the reference to the ‘old Shrovetide.’

253. He is thinking of the house servants at large who at that time were regarded as an intimate part of the large family.
254. Segesser uses the verb ‘tell,’ but the subsequent context clearly indicates the transfer of an object.

255. He actually means that his uncle had asked him for such items for his collection.

256. Here follows Segesser’s own footnote: Lord Apodaca has decided himself to ship this chest since he is shipping [other] things to Genoa anyway, etc.

257. Metaphorical reference to the Eucharist.

258. Idiomatic expression for: everything has been lost.

259. Segesser refers to the Seven-Year War that raged at that time in Germany from (1754) 1756 to 1763, with Prussia fighting against an alliance of Austria, Russia, France, and the German Empire, while somewhat supported by England. Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and some of the Scandinavian countries were also involved. In Europe the focus rested on the ultimately successful efforts by Frederick the Second (the Great) of Prussia to capture the rich province of Silesia from Queen Maria Theresa of Austria, while the conflict also extended to India and the New World, where it is known as the French and Indian War; for a surprisingly well-informed survey article, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Years%27_War (last accessed on Oct. 11, 2009). Here the truly international scope of that war comes clearly into focus.

260. This town was founded in March of 1749 upon the order of the governor Rafael Rodríguez Gallardo in honor of the Viceroy of New Spain, Don Juan Francisco de Güemez y Horcasitas, the first Count of Revillagigedo; see http://www.e-local.gob.mx/work/templates/enciclo/sonora/municipios/26056a.htm (last accessed on Aug. 23, 2009).

261. This entire paragraph required massive restructuring to be understandable, both in German and in English. It was necessary to break down a huge convolute of main and subordinate clauses that were badly entangled.

