

Letter 387
Nuenen, mid November 1884

Dear Theo,

I suppose you already know that Father has refused the living at Helvoirt.

I was not indifferent to the decision, as in no case would I have gone with them to Helvoirt, and would either have stayed here in my studio or gone to Antwerp. Now, as far as I can see, it is, and will be, best for me simply to go on as I am, and to stay here.

Recently I really haven't been doing so badly. It is true that I can't have any financial success with my work here, but I am making really good friends here, who I believe will become even better.

Last week I painted still life day after day with the people who paint at Eindhoven.

That new acquaintance, the tanner whom I told you about, applies himself wonderfully. But I, for my part, must do something in return to keep up the friendship. But I don't see that I am the loser by it, as I work with more animation when I have some conversation.

Hermans has so many beautiful things, old jars and other antiques, that I want to ask you if I could oblige you by painting for your room a still life of some of these objects, for instance of Gothic things – those I have done with Hermans up to now are simpler in character. But just today he told me that if I wanted to paint for myself a picture of things that were still too difficult for him, I could take them with me to the studio. Please give me an answer to this, and if you like, I shall make one for you, and will pick out the best things. I have finished a little one already. As to my asking you to send me another 20 francs before the end of this month, I hope you will do so.

I am getting on pretty well, but my expenses are not getting smaller; but by working very hard now, I am making progress.

Do help me by sending what I ask if it is at all possible. Otherwise these last days of the month will be very hard for me and the work will suffer more than is necessary.

And I will give it back to you in my work. That's all I can say about it.

At all events, I will ask for those things of Hermans' and make something for you; you will see for yourself what I told you about the colour, that it is improving. I have also started another watercolour of the water mill [F 1144a, JH 523]

Goodbye, with a handshake,

Ever yours, Vincent

I know that it is a hard time for you, but we must push on, and sure enough there will be a change for the better.