

0472. LEOPOLD MOZART TO PRINCE-BISHOP IGNAZ JOSEPH, COUNT VON SPAUR,¹
BRESSANO²

Most Worthy, Nobly Born Prince!

Salzburg, 31st July, 1778

My Most Gracious Lord!³

May Your Princely Grace⁴ most graciously allow me, as an old, sincere servant, to wish you, from a sincere heart and most obediently on the feast-day that bears your name, well-being in every way, both temporal and eternal, and all the blessing, happiness and [5] contentment that you would wish yourself; I must also, however, at once beg your indulgence for coming to this somewhat late, but your Most Elevated Person⁵ will forgive this failing most graciously when I am forced to excuse myself with the most dismaying and unexpected news of the death of my excellent wife. Since the 23rd March she had been in *Paris* with her son; [10] she postponed her customary spring bloodletting until the 11th June, although I had already reminded her about it at the beginning of May. She wrote to me afterwards on the 12th, and felt well, but after a week she was seized with a feverish chill and diarrhoea and she died on 3rd July. As late as the 13th I received news in which my son made reference to a dangerous illness, [15] and the next thing he did was to write to inform Abbé Bullinger,⁶ house tutor⁷ to the young Count Arco,⁸ of the death which had already taken place; the Abbé called to inform me secretly of this, but found both me and my poor daughter prepared for this sad news. Now my son is in Paris staying with the Ambassador of Saxony-Gotha, Baron von Grimm,⁹ our old friend. I did not wish to inform Your Princely Grace of the appalling, tyrannical circumstances [20] which finally forced my son to leave his Fatherland: it was on 23rd September last year, as I was very indisposed with a chest ailment, and yet had to stand the pain of seeing my wife and my son setting off. A family had to be torn apart, one that lived together not as parents and children, but as friends, [25] and which had not only given no cause for such a cruel development, but had made every effort to earn the favour of the Prince¹⁰ and the goodwill of the whole general public. – And we surely had the latter – but since the hours of a man’s life are counted, the Prince had to be the unfortunate instrument which, according to the unbreakable chain of Divine Providence, [30] forced the most honest wife and best of mothers to her to seek her grave in Paris. How painfully this event must have weighed upon a 58-year-old man can

¹ “Fürstbischof Ignaz Joseph Graf von Spaur”. BD: Ignaz Joseph, Graf Spaur (1727-1779), cathedral canon in Salzburg from 1755 to 1776, 1778-1779 Bishop of Brixen/Bressanone. Cf. Nos. 0033; 0109/53. Name-day 31st July.

² “Brixen”. At that time Austrian, today Italian.

³ “Hochwürdigster Hochgebohrner Fürst! Gnädigster Herr”.

⁴ “Euer Fürst: Gnaden”.

⁵ “Höchstderselbe”.

⁶ BD: Abbé Franz Joseph Johann Nepomuk Bullinger (1744-1810), Jesuit, private tutor, friend of the Mozart family in Salzburg, where he seems to have arrived between 1774 and 1776. House tutor to Count [Graf] Leopold Ferdinand Arco, later to Count [Graf] Sigmund (“Sigerl”) Lodron. Amateur viola player. Mozart called him “his best of all friends” (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

⁷ “Hofmeister”.

⁸ BD: Leopold Ferdinand III, Count [Graf] Arco (1764-1832), son of Senior Chamberlain [Oberstkämmerer] Leopold Julius Felix, Count [Graf] Arco. Probably a pupil of Leopold Mozart. Cf. Nos. 0347/203; 0337/111.

⁹ BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. He was living with the Marquise d’Epinay just mentioned. After his mother’s death, Mozart moved into accommodation in his house.

¹⁰ “des Fürsten”. BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for a time, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

easily be appreciated. God's will be done! I commend the soul of my assuredly good and Christian wife to Your Princely Grace, furthermore beg Your Most Elevated Grace's¹¹ inclination towards myself and my daughter and am as long as I live, [35] in deepest devotion,

Your Princely Grace's
most submissively obedient

Salzburg, the 31st July, 1778

Leopold Mozart

Yesterday the oboist *Ferlendis*¹² [40] unexpectedly resigned his service and will go to Vienna, now we are without our first oboe. *Adlgasser*¹³ is dead, we are without a good organist. *Pergman*¹⁴ is Senior Clerk at St. Peter's – we are thus also without a good player of the hunting horn. And *Ferrari*¹⁵ is going too – then we are without a *violoncello*.

¹¹ “Hochdero Gnaden”.

¹² BD: Giuseppe Ferlendi(s) (1755 - after 1802), from Bergamo, oboist in the court music in Salzburg 1777-1778. Mozart wrote for him the oboe concerto mentioned in No. 0423/75 (either KV 217k or KV 314/285d).

¹³ BD: Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729-1777), pupil of Eberlin. Salzburg court organist and composer. Cf. No. 0041/17. He died on 22nd December, 1777. His last hours are described in No. 0395/20 ff. He left 3 children: Viktoria (* 1753), Joseph (* 1761), and Anna (* 1766).

¹⁴ BD: Joseph Bergmann, chancellery official in St. Peter's Benedictine foundation in Salzburg. From 1773 hunting horn player in the court music [“waldhornist”]. Cf. No. 0971/37.

¹⁵ BD: Antonio Ferrari, leader of the cellos in the court music and violinist at the cathedral. Cf. 337/59.