

0496.¹ MOZART TO HIS FATHER, SALZBURG

*À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold Mozart / maitre de la Chapelle de
S:A:R: / L'archeveque de salzbourg / à / Salzbourg / par augspurg – /
munic² –*

Strasbourg,³ 15th

[5] *Monsieur
mon très cher Père!*⁴

Octobre
1778

I received⁵ your 3 letters⁶ of 17th Sept.^{bre}, 24th Sept.^{bre} and 1st Oct.^{bre} safely, but could not possibly have replied to you sooner; – I hope you received my last letter⁷ from Nancy safely as well; – [10] I am glad from the bottom of my heart that both of you, praise and thanks be to God, are well; it is likewise with me, thanks be to God, and indeed very much so; – Now, as far as possible, I will give the most essential answers to your 3 letters –

What you wrote⁸ to me about *M:^{sr} Grimm*⁹ is of course better known to me than to you; – [15] everything is very courteous and good – which I know about – for if it were not so I would certainly not have been so circumstantial; – to *M:^{sr} Grimm* I owe no more than 15 *louis d'or*,¹⁰ and he himself is responsible for the default¹¹ on the repayment – and I have told him so too; – Well, what is the use of this verbiage? – we shall certainly speak of this in Salzburg [20] – I am most obliged to you for recommending the matter so warmly to *Padre Martini*¹² – and also for writing¹³ to *M:^{sr} Raaff*¹⁴ yourself in this regard – nor was I ever in any doubt about it – for I am well aware that you are certainly happy when you see your son happy and content – and am well aware that it cannot be better anywhere than in Munich – [25] since, because it is so close to Salzburg, I can visit you frequently – Hearing that *Mad:^{selle} Weber*,¹⁵ or rather my dear Weber girl, has been given a salary,¹⁶ and that they have thus finally let her receive her due deserts, has given me as great a joy as one can

¹ BD: This letter is preceded chronologically by No. 0499.

² = “To Monsieur Leopold Mozart, music director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop of Salzburg in Salzburg via Augsburg – Munich”.

³ BD: Mozart probably arrived here on 14th October, 1778.

⁴ = “My very dear father!”

⁵ BD: They had been sent in from Paris.

⁶ BD: Nos. 0490; 0491; 0493.

⁷ BD: No. 0494.

⁸ BD: No. 0491/6 ff.

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. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. He was living with the Marquise d'Epinaï just mentioned. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter's stay in Paris. After his mother's death, Mozart moved into accommodation in the house shared by Grimm and Madame d'Epinaï. Cf. lines 97; No. 0462/40.

¹⁰ BD: = 165 florins.

¹¹ BD: So Wolfgang had not put the 15 louis d'or on one side as announced in No. 0478/84-86, although he was surely paid in cash by Legros (cf. No. 0494/6667).

¹² BD: Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784), specialist in the theory and history of music. Taught Mozart during his stay in Bologna in preparation for admission to the *Accademia filarmonica*. Cf. No. 0171/20. He had been requested to write a letter of recommendation from Mozart, cf. No. 0490/27 ff.

¹³ BD: No. 0489b, lost.

¹⁴ BD: Anton Raaff (1714-1797), son of a shepherd, originally intended for the priesthood, appeared as a singer in Bonn, Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and Naples before a longer period of service in Mannheim and Munich. Cf. No. 0120/54.

¹⁵ BD: Aloisia Weber (c. 1760-1839) was 17 when Mozart met first her. She was already singing at court in Mannheim. She became a focus of Mozart's romantic aspirations. The family moved to Munich in 1778. In 1779 she was given a leading position at the German Opera in Vienna [Deutsche Oper]. Cf. No. 0405/30.

¹⁶ BD: The salaries according to Aloisia and her father had been mentioned in No. 0493/37-38.

expect from someone who has shared her concerns in every way; – I continue to recommend her to you most heartily; – [30] yet what I most wished is something I can sadly no longer hope for, namely to find her a position in service in Salzburg, for the Archbishop¹⁷ will not give her what she has there – all that is possible is that she might come to Salzburg for some time to sing an *opera*; I received a letter¹⁸ written in the greatest haste by her father¹⁹ the day before his departure for Munich – [35] in which he included this piece of news: – these poor people were all in the greatest anxiety on my account – thought I was dead since they went a complete month without a letter from me because the last but one from me went astray – and they were further confirmed in this opinion because there was talk in Mannheim that my blessed mother had died of a hereditary illness; [40] they had already all been praying for my soul; – the poor girl²⁰ went to the *Capuchin* church²¹ every day; – you will be laughing? – not me; it touches me, I can't help it; – Now to continue; – I believe I will quite certainly travel via Stuttgart²² to Augsburg, as I have gathered from your letters that there is nothing, or usually not much, [45] to do in *Donaueschingen*²³ – but you shall yet hear of this in a letter before my departure from Strassburg; –

Dearest father! – I assure you that if it were not for the pleasure of embracing you soon I would certainly not come to Salzburg! – For with the exception of this praiseworthy and truly fine desire, [50] I am truly doing the most foolish thing in the world; – believe with all confidence that these are my own thoughts and not borrowed from other people; – once they knew of my decision to leave, people did of course put truths in my way which I was able to oppose and defeat with no weapons other than my true, tender love for my best of all fathers, [55] upon which they of course had no choice but to commend me, although with the rejoinder that if my father knew my present circumstances and good prospects |: and had not, for example, heard reports from someone else's good friend, and indeed a false one :| he would certainly not write to me in such a way that I was not in a position to offer the least resistance; – [60] and I thought to myself, yes, if I did not have to tolerate so much vexation²⁴ in the house where I lodged, and if it had not all happened one thing after the other like a thunderstorm so that I might have had time to consider the matter properly with a cool head, – I would certainly have asked you emphatically to be patient for some time yet and believe me and to leave me in *Paris* longer;²⁵ [65] I assure you I would have attained honour, fame and money – and would quite certainly have pulled you out of your debts; – but now things are as they are; do not imagine that I regret it; – for only you, dearest father, only you can sweeten the bitterness of Salzburg for me; and that is what you will do, I am sure of that; yet I must confess to you openly [70] that I would arrive in Salzburg with a lighter heart if I did not know that I am in service there; – only this thought is unbearable for me! – Consider it yourself – put yourself in my place; – in Salzburg I do not know who I am – I am everything – and sometimes nothing at all, too – but I am not

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ BD: No. 0491a, lost.

¹⁹ BD: Franz Fridolin Weber (1733-1779): Initially a high administrative official [Amtmann], then employed at the court in Mannheim as a bass, prompter and music copyist. Moved to Munich with the court in 1778, then to Vienna when his daughter Aloisia, of great romantic interest to Mozart, was engaged there as a singer in 1779. He died shortly afterwards on 23rd October, 1779. Cf. No. 0405/29.

²⁰ BD: Aloisia Weber, see above.

²¹ BD: The church and monastery were torn down in 1838 to allow new road construction.

²² = "Stuttgart".

²³ BD: Donaueschingen, residence of the Prince [Fürst] von Fürstenberg. A possible visit there had been discussed, cf. Nos. 0485/61-62; 0490/61 ff.; 0491/112-114; 0493/47 ff.

²⁴ BD: More details in No. 0487/64 ff.

²⁵ BD: In No. 0469/185-186 Wolfgang was speaking about getting away from Paris as fast as possible.

demanding all that much for myself, nor is it all that little – but only something [75] – if only I can be something – in any other place I know this – and whoever is put in the violins stays there; – whoever is at the keyboard etc.: – yet all this will let itself be sorted out, – Well, I hope it will all turn out for my happiness and to my contentment; – I rely entirely on you; –

[80] Here the way things movies very *pauvre*²⁶ – yet the day after tomorrow, Saturday the 17th, I will give a concert²⁷ completely on my own |: so that I have no additional costs :| for the pleasure of good friends, music lovers and connoisseurs; – for if I had musicians involved the lighting would cost me over 3 *louis d’or*,²⁸ and who knows if our takings will amount to that; – [85] I am obliged to you for making such excellent arrangements regarding travelling money;²⁹ I believe I will not need it, even if I do not give a concert; – yet, as a precaution, I will take out a number of *louis d’or* here or in Augspurg since one cannot know what will come up – meanwhile, may life go very well for you indeed; I will write with more shortly – [90] It seems that my sonatas³⁰ have not yet been engraved, although they were promised me for the end of Sept.^{bre} – this is how things go when one cannot be there personally – here it is the headstrong Grimm’s fault once again – they will perhaps come out full of errors because I have not been able to look through them myself, but had to commission someone else to do it – [95] and I will probably be in Munich without the sonatas; – things of this kind, which look so small, can often bring fortune, honour and money, but also shame; – Now *adieu*; – I embrace my dearest sister with my whole heart, and I kiss you, dearest, best of fathers, in the enticing hope of embracing you soon myself and kissing your hands, and I am, sir, your most obedient son, [100]

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

My compliments to all Salzburg, but particularly to our dear and true friend, Herr *Bullinger*.³¹

²⁶ = “Poor, impoverished”.

²⁷ BD: Described in No. 0503/6 ff.

²⁸ BD: = 33 florins.

²⁹ BD: Cf. No. 0493/102-104.

³⁰ BD: The clavier/violin sonatas KV 301 (293a); 302 (293b); 303 (293c); 304 (300c); 305 (293d); 306 (300l) dedicated to the Palatine Electress, Elizabeth Maria Aloysia Auguste (1721-1794). Published in Paris by J.G. Sieber. Cf. Nos. 0363/84-85; 0487/138.

³¹ 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).