

Letter 093  
Dordrecht, 23 April 1877

Dear Theo,

I received your letter of April 21; thanks for writing so soon. The letter gave me a feeling of joy, like the woman who found her mite again must have felt, for you tell me that Aunt Koos's little writing desk, with the letters from Father and Mother, has been found by Mrs. Roos during the spring cleaning. How carefully and anxiously I looked for it last year, fancying I had taken it with me to England and had left it in one of the houses where I lived in London. I am so glad it has been found, I am so thankful for it. Keep it for me for the present; when I have started in Amsterdam, I shall want it. Now I remember quite well that I left it with Roos when I went to England because there was not much room in my trunk and also because I thought it would be safer than taking it with me abroad.

It seems to me a new proof and a hint – I have already observed more of them lately – that everything will be all right with me, that I shall succeed in the thing I so earnestly desire. Something of the old faith grows in me that my thoughts will be confirmed, my spirit renewed, and my soul restored to the old faith. It will be a choice for my whole life!

Fix your heart and mind upon a good thing and a good work also, and pray for it to the Lord.

Uncle Jan has been to Etten, and says that my little room is already waiting for me. Mr. Braat has somebody in mind for my place, so in May I shall probably be able to put my hand to the plough.

I will hang the prints you gave me in that little room, and so they will remind me of you daily.

Underneath the print after Rosenthal, that monk, I have written: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light; if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up my cross, and follow me – in the Kingdom of Heaven they neither marry, nor are given in marriage."

Underneath the pendant, "The Imitation of Jesus Christ" (after Ruyperez), I wrote what I heard Pa say, "Lord, I long so much to be earnest."

This morning I heard a beautiful sermon by the Reverend Mr. Keller van Hoorn; this afternoon Görlitz, Mager, ten Broek and I went to the museum to see the pictures by Scheffer – how beautiful they are.

Did I already tell you that Görlitz has been to Etten to apply for the teaching position at De Leur? He came back full of everything he had seen there. Father's sermon was about Jacob who slept in the field at Bethel, and it had touched him so. I wish he could get that place – then he would be able to marry soon.

Last week I had a letter from Harry Gladwell; he is in dangerous surroundings – the birdcatchers there are numerous and cunning. I hope to hear more soon, and we will talk it over sometime.

I know very little about Taine's life; I suppose he has travelled much in France, Italy, England, and also in Holland – so one would gather from his writings. He is surely an artist. I still have the first volume by Burger, *Musées*.

Well, Theo, I hope you have a good Sunday today. If I go to Amsterdam, I hope to see you beforehand.

To each day brings sorrow for "the sower of the Word" that I hope to become, as one that sows wheat in the fields – and the earth will produce nevertheless a pile of brambles and thistles. Therefore keep one for the other a good endorsement and cultivate our fraternal love.

À Dieu, give my regards to Roos, and receive a handshake from

Your loving brother, Vincent

It is raining here today, and one could almost fancy oneself in London. When I go to post this letter, I hope to walk down the little path behind the station where we walked together.