Paul Mascarene, “Governor Mascarene to M. Des Enclaves”, 29 June 1741,

in Thomas B. Akins, ed. *Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia*, (Halifax, Charles Annand Publishers, 1869), p. 111-112.

 \* ( *Jean Baptiste Desenclaves was missionary at Annapolis for many years*)

Monsieur,

The other Point of your letter on which I could not

answer in my last is that in which you mention ye Spiritual to be

so connected with the temporal as sometimes not to be able to

be divided. This Proposition requires some Explanation as it

is what may much contribute to the well or ill being of the-

Inhabitants. Under pretence of this connection the Missionarys

have often usurp'd the power to make themselves the

Sovereign judges & arbitrators of all causes amongst the

People; for example, a Parishioner complains to the Priest

that his Neighbour owes him or detains such a thing from

him, the Priest Examines the Neighbour in the way of

Confession. The man denies his owing or detain'g such

a thing unjustly. The Priest doth not stop where he

should but calls & Examines Witnesses & then decides

in a judicial manner & condemns the party to make restitution,

& to oblige him thereunto refuses to administer the

Sacraments, by which if the man is Persuaded, that it is

in the Priests Power to grant or withold the pardon of his

sins he is in a wofull case & must rather Submit to be

deprived of his goods than to incur damnation as he believes by

not receiv’g absolution from the Priest. Consider Monsieur

how this tends to render all civil judicature useless & how

easy it will be for the Missionarys to render themselves the

only distributors of Justice amongst people bred up in ignor-

ance; and of what consequence it is for the maintaining his

Maj’tys authority to restrain that Power which the Priests are

but too apt to assume upon the foresaid Proposition which can

at most extend no further than to exhort ye partys to Compose

amicably their differences or to have recourse to the way

of Justive as it is established in the Governement they live

under, & to abide by what decisions they give according as

the Rules & Laws by which they are to by try’d prescribe.

I would enlarge upon this head much more but will not detain

the bearer at present; I shall only tell you that this is one of

the blocks on which I have often forewarn’d you not to stumble.

I am with esteem

Mons.

29 June 1741, Mons. Des Enclaves