

À / Monsieur / Monsieur Leopold de Mozart / Maitre de la Chapelle de S: A: R:
L'archeveque de et à / Salzbourg.¹

Mon très cher Père!² –

Vienne ce 18 de Juin
1783

My congratulations, you are a grandpa! – Yesterday morning, the 17th, at half past 6, my dear wife was happily delivered of a large, strong boy, round as a ball; [5] – the pains started at half past 1 at night – consequently – with this night came the end of any peace and sleep for both of us. – at 4 o'clock I sent for my mother-in-law – and then for the midwife; – at 6 o'clock she was put on the stool³ – and at half past 6 it was all over.⁴ – My mother in law is now compensating with every kindness for the malice she had shown her while she was single. – She stays with her the whole day. –

My dear wife, who kisses your hand, and embraces my dear sister from the heart, finds herself, as far as these circumstances allow, in very good shape; – I hope to God, since she is taking good care of herself, [15] that she will also come through her confinement well. –

I am worried about lacteal fever! – For she has considerable breasts! – Now the child, against my will and yet with my consent, has been given a wet-nurse! – My wife, whether she is capable of it or not, should never suckle her child, that was always my firm resolution! – [20] but nor should my child swallow someone else's milk! – Rather, I want to raise it with water,⁵ as with my sister and me. – only – the midwife, my mother-in-law, and most people here have begged me in no uncertain way not to do this, simply for the reason that most children here perish on water, [25] since the people here cannot handle it properly – that has now motivated me – to give way – for – I would not wish to make myself open for an accusation. –

Now concerning the godfathership! – Listen to what has happened to me. – I immediately sent a message informing *Baron Wetzlar*⁶ |: as my true, good friend :| of my wife's successful delivery; – upon which he immediately came himself – [30] and *offered* himself as godfather – I could not refuse him – and thought to myself, I can still call him *Leopold* despite that – – and while I was thinking that – he said, full of joy – Ah, now you have a little *Raymund* – and kissed the child – so what was to be done? – I therefore had the boy baptised *Raymund Leopold*. – I can honestly admit to you that [35] if you had not written a letter to me with your opinion on this, I would have found myself very *embarrassed* – and I would not want to answer for the consequences if I had perhaps flatly refused him! – But your letter gives me consolation that you will not be dissatisfied with the course I have taken! – He is, after all, also called *Leopold*.

[40] – Now I must close. – Along with my good lady in confinement, I kiss your hands 1000 times and we embrace our dear sister 1000 times and are, sir, eternally your

¹ Address in DME. "To Monsieur Leopold de Mozart, music director to His Royal Highness the Archbishop in and of Salzburg."

² = "Vienna, this 18th day of June, 1783 / My very dear father!"

³ BD: Giving birth in a stool was customary at this time.

⁴ BD: According to Nissan, Mozart composed the minuet and trio of a string quartet KV 421 (417b) during the delivery.

⁵ BD: Mozart and his sister were of course not fed on water, but oats or barley pap (called "barley water" in No. 0553/42 ff.).

⁶ BD: Raimund Wetzlar, Baron [Freiherr] von Plankenstern (1752-1810). Erstwhile landlord to the Mozarts. Godfather of Mozart's first son, Raimund Leopold. It was in his house that Mozart first met Da Ponte. He and his siblings subscribed to Mozart's concerts.

most obedient children,
W: A: C: Mozart mp⁷

⁷ mp = “manu propria” = “in his/her own hand”.