

J. M. J.

CIRCULAR.

June 20

NOTRE DAME, Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1879.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

I cannot let the first Titular Feast of the Congregation pass without addressing you a few lines, were it only to invite you all to thank the Sacred Heart for the many precious blessings we have drawn already from this inexhaustible centre of all graces, since the 23d of April, and to deepen and widen still more, if possible, your confidence, to such a degree as to secure all we need, to come out in time from a calamity calculated to ruin us, had we relied only on human wisdom and ordinary resources.

These two months, I may say for myself at least, have been months of severe trial; but, judging of the future from the past—knowing now better than ever before the devotedness of our Religious, as a body, and the personal value of each one (for adversity is a crucible in which a community tests almost infallibly the real metal of each of its members), as also the true sentiments of our friends and well-wishers at large,—judging, I say, of the immediate future, from our recent and extremely touching experiment, I should be blind and alike ungrateful to yield now to doubts and apprehensions. More than ever, let us place our hopes and prayers and needs in the Sacred Heart—the primary Patron of our Congregation; above all, let us try to honor It by the faithful observance of our Rules; and whilst our glorious and loving Patron is failing us in nothing, let us not fail first in duty, but endeavor to deserve an increase of graces and blessings.

On receipt of this circular, a new Novena shall be commenced in honor of the Sacred Heart in each one of our houses: let the Litany of the Sacred Heart be recited every morning, with the three invocations of our Rules. And in order to secure the best thanks for the past, and the most fervent petitions for our actual and urgent wants, every member of the Congregation is hereby invited to receive Holy Communion every morning for nine days.

Should we fail to make good our promises to the public, some one among us shall have to take the responsibility of the failure. In no case should we ever complain of Providence, but only of ourselves.

To finish our task in time, everyone must see that we need an increase of hands, of funds, and of zeal. Vacation will afford, to many, an occasion to show their devotedness to Notre Dame.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
SUPERIOR GENERAL.