

J. M. J.

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 18.

OF THE

Very Rev. SUPERIOR GENERAL

OF THE

Congregation of the Holy Cross.

NOTRE DAME, IND., August 21, 1888.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

At last I begin to breathe again, and hasten to offer you, each and all, my most cordial thanks for your precious, deeply moving and duly appreciated manifestations of filial love on the memorable Feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Mother—a Feast which will make an epoch in the annals of our Congregation in this New World, and especially in the history of Notre Dame, now and forever dedicated to the Queen of Heaven.

Fortunately, I could find some relief in the well-known fact that my Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee was not the cause, but simply the occasion, of the grand demonstrations we all witnessed and admired, directed, as they were exclusively to the honor and glory of the Mother of God, now more than ever, reigning supreme in boundless love over the little Domain so directly and unquestionably consecrated to her glorious name. With all my heart I joined in the great concert of praise and glory to thank her for all she has done here during half a century.

The presence alone of an Eminent Prince of the Church, never seen here before, accompanied by so many great and illustrious dignitaries of the Sacred Hierarchy, would have made it a day never to be forgotten at Notre Dame—a real Assumption, a heavenly triumph, as had never been seen on these happy premises.

All indeed seemed most heartily to share in the grand celebration, because it was, from beginning to end, to honor and to praise our common and glorious heavenly Mother. May she look upon it as a sincere and heartfelt acknowledgment on our part of all we owe her since the day we reached this blessed forest, wholly covered with her stainless mantle of snow. What a change here since the day of our arrival! We love to remember our boundless trust then—not in gold, for we had none; nor in any human means of success, as we were completely destitute of all; but we can never forget our boundless confidence in Her; and she never disappointed, but always blessed us beyond our expectations.

But what new delight to live here now among so many striking and wonderful blessings of Heaven so universally acknowledged! What a joy to kneel in that new sanctuary, consecrated to the Sacred Heart, with the beautiful chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart! What a pleasure to listen to that splendid bell, carrying far and near the praises of Her in whose honor it is now blessed! What a sight by day and by night for all the neighborhood to look at that Immaculate Figure of Our Blessed Mother on the Dome! What a consolation to feel that in whatever direction we turn our eyes or move our steps, every building and every inch of ground is now and forever consecrated to the Mother of God!

I never felt as I now feel, "how good it is for us to be here"; and what doubles the delight of it, a hundred times, is to know that we owe all to our beloved Heavenly Mother. That such an unprecedented event, so universally noticed around us, should mark an epoch in our annals and a new era of great blessings from above upon our Religious Family, seems to be the genuine expectation of all.

Now, therefore, is our time to secure by our religious, exemplary, devoted and self-sacrificing conduct, in whatever office obedience may have assigned us, all the new blessings so evidently poured forth upon this opening scholastic year. Now, if ever, is the time for each of us to say with a firm resolution: I will fill my office this year as I never did before; I will try to honor the Blessed Virgin and secure her protection upon all my movements from morning to night. I will live for her. Who knows? It may be my last chance, my last year; and then, an eternity of happiness in heaven, or of misery in hell. My last year! I may not see the end of it in this world. A Golden Jubilee is a rare favor. May God grant me to begin a new life, that I may die in peace and in full faith that my beloved Mother will assist me and bring my soul to her Divine Son in Heaven! Oh! what a rich harvest of blessings and successes the Congregation would gather from such a universal resolve faithfully and energetically carried out!

Once more, I thank, with all my heart, every member of our dear Religious Family, from here and from abroad, for the exquisite testimonies of affection I have received from all, and for which I earnestly pray Our Blessed Mother to bless them as they richly deserve.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior General.