

J. M. J.

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 36

OF THE

Very Rev. SUPERIOR GENERAL

OF THE

Congregation of the Holy Cross.

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NOTRE DAME, Nov. 26, 1892.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

This fiftieth anniversary of our first arrival at Notre Dame, on the 26th of November, 1842, makes such an impression upon me that I feel at a loss how to express myself. The extraordinary event which we commemorate is clear and fresh in memory, but words fail me to tell of it. If we had come with abundant means we might, humanly speaking, have indeed looked forward to great success. But arriving almost penniless, it was but natural that those around us, friendly though they were, should smile at our strange undertaking. But we had already received very different impressions from above. Our confidence was not to rest on human means, but on the protection of Heaven.

*Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui ædificant eam.* A rich man seldom raises his eyes to Heaven for help, but thinks of his wealth and forgets God. The poor man continually thinks of his heavenly Father to secure His assistance in all his needs. Thus he lives with God, while the other's attention is absorbed in looking over his precious treasures. Such was the happy result of our blessed poverty; keeping our eyes and our hearts constantly raised to Heaven to secure the attention of our blessed Father upon our ever-increasing needs, and thus enable us to accomplish His merciful designs.

The season in which we came—that of a long and severe winter of five months and of constant snow—multiplied not a little our trials. Sometimes we found our beds in the morning covered with snow. What a fine preparation for our meditation! “Blessed are the poor, for they shall see God.” Not only in Heaven, but even here upon earth. “They shall live in Him, move in Him, and have in Him their very being.”

Our little community was never more edifying. Our dear Brothers, of whom only one remains, had to suffer, God alone knows in how many ways, being obliged for two months to take their night's rest on the bare floor; and yet not a word of complaint. God's holy will was their comfort and unfailing source of consolation and joy. Happily, the same religious spirit continues to reign among our dear members of to-day. May it continue forever, and thereby secure all the blessings our great work requires wherever we may be established, and thus make us all happy in God's holy service.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,

Superior-General.