

J. M. J.

CIRCULAR LETTER No. 96  
OF THE  
VERY REVEREND SUPERIOR-GENERAL  
TO THE  
Congregation of the Holy Cross.

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NOTRE DAME, April 19th, 1879.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

When this will reach you I shall be once more, and for the 18th time, on my way to Europe; not indeed, on a pleasure trip, but, beyond doubt, in discharge of strict duty. Good Bro. Anthelm, now in Texas, will accompany me, his services being absolutely required in France again as Director of our large Farm at the St. Joseph Asylum, near Lafaye. He will meet me in New York for the 30th inst., the day the steamer leaves for Havre-de-Grace. Should any one desire to write me before we take the sea, letters may be addressed until *then* to Sweeney's Hotel, New York; and afterwards to College de Ste-Croix, Neuilly—Paris, France.

If I have not made this announcement earlier, it is because of my increasing dislike to bidding adieu in any shape; and also because I, somehow, expected something might turn up beyond the ocean, to dispense me with the journey. But, at this last hour, I see I must go.

The gratifying advances of the Congregation in Canada, with the additional expenditures they necessitate, have lately brought to me letters and entreaties so urgent that I cannot refuse them a week, before embarking. Hence my departure from here, on Monday next, for Montreal.

Need I commend our journey to your prayers? I rather offer you all, the congratulations of the season, and beseech you by our most sacred and common interests, to strive and imitate the true Religious in every Community in "their newness of life, modelling their conduct after that of the risen Saviour who dies no more." Until I return let no sad report ever come to increase the pain of our departure and separation. Oh! may God grant that every mail bring me the most consoling news of my dear home and beloved New World.

Above all, let every member of our Religious Family ever exhibit, in practice, due respect for the exercises of the Community. On this point, which is of vital importance to all, I have a fear which may seem strange to many, but to me sufficiently grounded, viz.: that some Confessors pass too lightly over such repeated infractions. A strict Director of souls in a Community, is, *de facto*, the first guardian of the Rules, and consequently the most efficient promoter of fervor and virtue. A zealous confessor finds the rest of his conscience in the perfection of his penitents.

Another thing must be not only mentioned again, but stopped. Notwithstanding all recommendations and censures in the past, some of our Houses are yet governed without any regular weekly Council, by the head alone, or rather without anything worth the name; ignoring all economy, and, among other useless expenses, allowing costly journeys, which conscientious councillors would certainly refuse. As a remedy for such an abuse I must require, until further orders, from the Secretary of every Establishment, to send monthly to Headquarters the exact minutes of the four previous meetings.

I exceedingly regret my inability to visit several Houses where I was expected; the state of my health must be my apology; it is only since ten or twelve days I feel like myself again.

Yours devotedly in J. M. J.,

H. SORIN, C.S.C.,  
Superior-General.