

CIRCULAR LETTER No. 106  
OF THE  
**VERY REV. SUPERIOR GENERAL**  
TO THE  
**Congregation of the Holy Cross.**

NOTRE DAME, Ind., January 17th, 1881.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST :

Although I thanked you already, and in advance, for your pious wishes of the season, I feel almost obliged to renew my thanks; for I had not anticipated such a number of exquisite epistles, every one of which I have read with more than ordinary gratification. Each one was to me, I may say, a most delightful interview with the writer of such beautiful sentiments. May God return you all, a hundredfold, every blessing you ask for me! This is not, however, the only reason of this new Circular; I have another, to which I finally call your serious attention, after long considerations and humble prayers to our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, and especially to the Divine Infant.

You will agree with me, I am sure, and acknowledge that we owe not a little, but more than we can ever express, to the Holy Mother of God. Can we say that we have all adequately shown our gratitude for what she has done for each one of us? I, for one, cannot; but I sincerely and most earnestly wish I could. More than one of you, certainly, will join with me, and say and feel the same. Nothing would delight us more than a sure means to procure her glory. Here is one: We have it in our power, both as a Religious body and as individual members of the Family of the Holy Cross, to glorify our Blessed Mother, to make her known and loved all over the New World; in a word, to erect to her sweet name a monument of gratitude such as single personal efforts could hardly accomplish anywhere. This is what I come to offer you, as a power Divine Providence places in our hands to effect an immense good, by spreading around us the knowledge, the love and devotion for which the "AVE MARIA" was first established here in 1865. That the foundation of such a Journal has pleased her, and that she has blessed us for it, these two last years alone would more than prove; and to receive indifferently such marks of her maternal love would simply show that we have no heart to appreciate even the greatest favors. I therefore write and make an appeal to every Religious of the Holy Cross for a simultaneous and earnest effort to increase, at once, the number of subscribers to the "AVE MARIA." Until I see every Catholic family in the congregations entrusted to our Rev. Fathers, and every Catholic youth in our schools, on the list of our regular subscribers or readers, I shall have to hold in painful doubt the love of pastors and teachers for our Blessed Mother; or, if I cannot doubt their love and zeal, I shall have to question seriously their influence, their ability, or the esteem in which I might have fancied they were held in the church or class-room. I wish to credit every one according to personal merit and success: each time a remittance is sent here for new subscribers, I want to know to whose exertions the favor is due, that I may present the same to our Blessed Queen. Therefore I shall require the Secre-

tary of the "AVE MARIA" Office to present me every Saturday an exact list of the new subscriptions procured by our Religious; for I must know, week by week, what has been done by each one of them for the Journal.

As we intend immediately some expensive improvements for the Journal, viz.: new buildings, new types, a card must be solicited from all commercial houses with which our Religious are dealing. To advertise in a weekly publication whose circulation is already so extensive, and daily increasing, must certainly be profitable to those we patronize: the favor must be reciprocal.

The prosperity of the country since twelve months, which has brought a comparative ease and comfort to almost every family, the well-known ability and character of our contributors, the perfect assurance every one may have, never to meet an offensive line in the Blessed Virgin's Journal, the imperious necessity to supply Christian youth and families with an antidote to the poisonous, pestiferous reading now deluging society, and to maintain principles of faith and piety, respect for the Church and parental authority; these and many other reasons of vital importance will make, I know, a deep impression upon serious minds. They will feel that an effort in this direction cannot fail to bring blessings on their labors; they will introduce the Messenger of Mary as a weekly harbinger of joyous omen; they will refer to it daily, and quote it as often; and very soon they will draw to its admirable pages eager aspirations and abiding love.

With a will, we may swell the list of subscriptions from 15,000 to 20,000, before the end of the scholastic year. As an encouragement in this labor of love, you will bear in mind that besides the precious Apostolic Blessings of the saintly Pius IX and his illustrious successor, Leo XIII, you entitle yourselves and your pious subscribers, to the priceless benefits of the Perpetual Daily Mass, celebrated here. Need I say, to justify my appeal and fire your zeal, that every day increases, for good or for evil, the influence of the Press on society. The "AVE MARIA" never stood higher than it does at this moment. Therefore, now is our time.

Every priest and teacher of our Congregation will receive gratuitously a copy which, I trust, will soon be made the right of the receiver, in accordance with the rule governing clubs.

According to the devotedness and the success the above recommendations will meet among our religious, you will allow me to judge of the esteem and consideration in which they should be held themselves by their associates and by me. *Qui elucidant me, vitam aeternam habebunt*—They that explain Me shall have life everlasting. (Eccli. xxiv, 41.) Can we ever meet on a more acceptable ground? I would pity any dissenter or indifferent religious.

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

N. B.—Some of our Religious who are not engaged in teaching may have friends and acquaintances whom they will easily persuade to subscribe to the "AVE MARIA." I will take upon myself to reward the more successful ones. A sample copy will be sent to any address which they designate, they to accompany it with a letter.

P. S. Jan. 31, 1881. Until a new Provincial is named, the affairs of the Province shall be referred, by right, to the Assistant Provincial, the Rev. Father L. Letourneau, now, per interim, the head of the Provincial Council.

E. S.