

J. M. J.

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OF THE

VERY REV. SUPERIOR GENERAL

OF THE

Congregation of the Holy Cross.

NOTRE DAME, April 20, 1882.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

Once more, imperative necessity calls me to the shores of Europe, at least for a brief visit. Before leaving, I deem it my duty to recommend my journey to your fervent prayers. I will take the sea on the 22d, by the *City of Rome*, 10 or 12 days later than I had intended, as no berth could be secured before that time. This will account for the disappointment I involuntarily inflict upon those I had promised to visit, this spring; a disappointment, I am sure, more painful to myself than any one else. This unavoidable absence, however, will not be long, I trust; for I certainly intend, *D. V.*, to return before the end of May. One thing consoles me: I go again in the interests of the Congregation. Its trials in France are such as to call for some particular manifestation of sympathy at any sacrifice on my part. And as it takes but two days to go from Paris to Rome, I shall not fail to obtain our Holy Father's blessing upon us all.

As the date of my embarking at New York is the eve of a sad anniversary, you may well imagine with what a heavy heart I shall leave the shores of the New World. But I must confess that, during the past forty years, no event has more sensibly and materially increased my faith and confidence in the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph than the crushing and sudden calamity of the 23d of April, 1879. Humanly speaking, it should have proved a death-blow. For a while, Satan may have indulged in such anticipations; but St. Joseph was entreated to take the matter in his own hand, and he did. And very soon he showed to the arch-fiend that she, whose blessed statue he had dared to drag down into the flames, was ever able and ready to assert her perfect dominion over him, and thus give new evidence of the complete fulfilment of the prophecy of old, which proclaimed her own Immaculate Conception.—(Gen. iii, 15.) And now, to his deep humiliation, the wicked one again realizes that, however artfully he may lie in wait for her heel, she will infallibly crush his head. Every one can see here a new proof of this; and, indeed, such is the declaration on the lips of every visitor, when comparing the New Notre Dame with the Old.

In feeble acknowledgment of all that we owe to the glorious Queen of our dear home here, and to her beloved spouse, St. Joseph, the Patron of our family and of our grounds, lake, river, and county, I succeeded, two years ago, in affiliating the whole Congregation of the Holy Cross to the Confraternity of the HOLY FAMILY, which has been duly approved by the Holy See. The new and beautiful chapel of the Sisters here has been dedicated, for the same reason, to the Holy Family. On my return from Rome, I shall make known the new Indulgences and special encouragements bestowed upon this Confraternity by our Holy Father. Meanwhile, I would earnestly beg of every member of the Holy Cross, who has not joined it yet, not to fail to be enrolled on the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, 30th inst., and thereby, secure the Plenary Indulgence offered to all on the day of admission, with the usual conditions. The object of this Holy Confraternity is to honor the Holy Family; that all its members may study and imitate the life of that Earthly Trinity, and secure for themselves the protection of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Evidently, it is adapted to none better than ourselves. In every way, it should be *our own* Confraternity.

Need I say, while parting with you, for a time, that my heart remains with you all? I could not forget, even for a moment, a single member of a family, which God Himself blesses so abundantly every day. My unceasing prayer will be to see you again as soon as I may, and to find you, if possible, even more attached and more devoted to the interests of our dear Congregation than I am myself. *Pax vobis*: Peace be with you!

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