March 28, 1844

Dear Sir,

Although by some mistake a letter addressed to me from South Bend has no signature, I take it to come from you, as the head of the Institution, and hasten to reply.

I do not think that girls should be received into schools conducted by men. As there are many schools for girls conducted by females, I should think it desirable that all your efforts should be directed to the instruction of boys. In no circumstance would I admit boys and girls, even of tender age, in the same schools.

Gratuitous schools are the most suitable to the charitable genius of our Religion, and the best calculated to promote piety among the people generally. We have colleges already. We need schools for the poor. Now

[Signature]
They may be supported is, of course, a serious difficulty; but I should hope that the charity of the faithful would supply means. Schools on low terms might nearly answer the same end. I should think it advisable to extend the labors of the brothers to as many dioceses as desire them. When proper discipline prevails in an Institute, the more widely it is extended, the greater are the advantages.

I think the schools should be strictly Catholic. By admitting other children, the brothers will be embarrassed in the religious instruction of Catholics, who will be laughed out of their religion by their Protestant schoolmates. This is the sad experience of Catholic colleges which are open to all. The system followed is scarcely to be imitated by a Religious Institute, which should be unreservedly devoted to spread the knowledge of the true faith, and to promote piety. The avowal of this purpose would command the respect of all, and no children would be sent whose parents were not willing that they should be brought up in the Catholic faith.
I give you my views with great freedom, as you have desired them. I should be glad to have some of your brothers in this diocese as soon as we can make the necessary arrangements for receiving them. There is in Kensington, which is a district adjoining this city, a good large house built by Revd. J. I. Donahoe, for ladies who are now in Dubuque. If you could instate with him, and make it your own, I would give every encouragement in my power to your labors in this place. A school could be opened, and much good done. It is probable you might have it on easy terms, since it was built in part by public contributions and labor. If you choose to communicate with him, you may address him at Dubuque. Unfortunately I have no means at my disposal. Wishing you success in your holy undertakings. I remain

Phil. March 18, 1844. Your Ob. Serv.

+Francis Patrick O'Ree