CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 1
OF THE
Very REV. SUPERIOR GENERAL
OF THE
Congregation of the Holy Cross.

NOTRE DAME, IND., Oct. 22, 1885.

REV. FATHERS and Beloved CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

It was only last night, at a late hour, I could finish reading the numerous letters the return of my glorious Patron's Feast brings to me from all parts. Of my deep and heartfelt gratitude for such precious testimonies of filial love and assurance of your devotion to God for the blessed feast of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, I need now mention nothing. I am sure, even for a moment. Indeed, the expression of your beautiful sentiments never made upon my poor, sensitive heart such a vivid and indelible impression. I wish I could express to every one of my beloved well-wishers, individually, what I must address to all collectively: "God Himself is charity—Deus charitatis est; and he who does not love resembles . . . . what? The true children of God are all alike—possessing the unsearchable feature or Divine stamp of resemblance with their Heavenly Father. They were born to love for time and forever. Three times our Blessed Lord asked the same of St. Peter: Lovedst thou Me?—Why did He so readily forgive Magdalene? "Because she had loved much, all her sins were forgiven her." What brought the miraculous impression of the Sacred Face on Veronic'a's towel? The impression of her loving heart. Charity covers a multitude of sins, imperfections, errors. Long as there is love in a heart there is hope that the link binding earth to Heaven is not broken. The celebration of St. Peter's Feast renews and strengthens our best aspirations to an endless love which alone can satisfy the wants of our hearts. Without love, life is void; with love it intensifies this Divine element of our nature; it permeates our whole being with that heaven-born spirit which made the first Christians an object of admiration and respect for one another.

I never was indifferent towards a loving heart; experience alone would have long since taught me the rich mine a loving soul possesses, compared to a heartless being who has robbed of its most precious jewel. God Himself is charity—Deus charitatis est; and he who does not love resembles . . . . what? The true children of God are all alike—possessing the unsearchable feature or Divine stamp of resemblance with their Heavenly Father. They were born to love for time and forever. Three times our Blessed Lord asked the same of St. Peter: Lovedst thou Me?—Why did He so readily forgive Magdalene? "Because she had loved much, all her sins were forgiven her." What brought the miraculous impression of the Sacred Face on Veronic'a's towel? The impression of her loving heart. Charity covers a multitude of sins, imperfections, errors. Long as there is love in a heart there is hope that the link binding earth to Heaven is not broken. The celebration of St. Peter's Feast renews and strengthens our best aspirations to an endless love which alone can satisfy the wants of our hearts. Without love, life is void; with love it intensifies this Divine element of our nature; it permeates our whole being with that heaven-born spirit which made the first Christians an object of admiration and respect for one another.

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