CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 20.
OF THE
Very Rev. SUPERIOR GENERAL
OF THE
Congregation of the Holy Cross.

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA, OCTOBER 16, 1888.

REV. FATHERS AND DEAREST-BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:
I have finished my serious but delightful task of reading, as attentively as joyfully, every letter received, from far and near, during the past week, on the occasion of St. Edward’s Feast. They were more numerous than ever before, and their contents surpassed their number in beauty of expression and sentiment, to my heart that is brimming over with gratitude and paternal love for each and all the members of our beloved Family. May God reward all my dear well-wishers according to the sincerity and fervor of their prayers in my behalf, on the return of the glorious Feast of my royal Patron Saint! May I at length profit by so many loving recommendations, and commence, in earnest, to walk in the footsteps of my admirable model of all virtues! What a wonderful, marvellous thing is a blessing! What a blessing St. Edward was to the unfortunate kingdom of England, and may a complete change he made in the entire nation, from misery to happiness, by his extraordinary efforts, will draw from Heaven upon 

- a blessing a saintly king is for a kingdom! But here is the point I thus purposely illustrate, that you may clearly and fully comprehend, as I do myself, what a treasure and delight it must be to us all, as a religious spirit, to be interested in such an opportunity to do justice to our weighty obligations, with the aid of your beautiful letters, which I will keep, and have a place for them both at home and far and near, as a precious treasure to myself, and a living testimony of your religious spirits, the best guarantee that, if I may, less now than ever before, rely for success on any natural ability or means, I may, supported as

- I may, supported as by the thousand, from hearts so well known and so deeply esteemed and loved, make me happy and give me a new life, conveying as they do the precious confidence that, if I may, less now than ever before, rely for success on any natural ability or means, I may, supported as I feel to be by a host of heroic souls, truly rely on the accomplishment of the counterpart of the solemn declaration quoted above: Omnia possam in omni me confirme—“I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me.” Therefore, you are all interested in the fulfilment of your pious promises; with your aid before God, I trust I will, for a while at least, do justice to my weighty obligations, to your own serious advantages. Without such an assistance from your prayers I would fail, and you would be the first to suffer from it. A superior either of a Congregation or of an establishment, or even of a special department, must look for success through, not only the devotedness but also the religious dispositions, the daily prayers of all interested in the same.

From the beginning of our Congregation to this day, experience continues to teach us that want of success or failure in our undertakings is due to the inefficiency of the heading factor. Wherever an able and truly religious superior has infused a proper spirit of strict regularity, devotedness and self-sacrifice, the blessing of God has been manifest, with overpowering all difficulties of grace and of human condition. But to secure such a result, superiors must be assisted by the good will, and daily, fervent, and incessant prayers of all and every one associated to carry out Heaven’s design.

This very moment, I hear from Paris that our college there has opened with not half the number of students—an attendance such as they never had before. But by the same mail the Very Rev. Father Provincial, informs me that our dear Religious Institute closed up every day by order of the Government, and every one of them expelled! They urge me to go to them at once. Shall we not hasten to their assistance by redoubling our prayers in their behalf? Here is a case of distress: a threat of ruin for our entire dear Province of France! Shall we not avail ourselves of the precious opportunity the Month of the Holy Rosary affords us to supplicate, to entreat our Blessed Mother, not to permit such a calamity, but to thwart such impious designs? Now is our time to repeat to her again and again: “Monstra te esse Matrem.” Should I learn to-morrow or next day that such a threat has been carried out I scarcely know what would become of me. But I cannot admit of such a disaster, as the Blessed Virgin can prevent it. Let us pray, but pray so fervently that we may secure her assistance and a new victory.

Once more I thank you, with all my heart, for your beautiful festal letters, which I will keep, as a precious treasure to myself, and a living testimony of your religious spirits, the best guarantee we can have of the blessings of God on the dear Family.

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