

umnies, vexations of all kinds will be poured out upon you for My sake but then shall you be blessed. It is in vain to multiply against you those calumnious accusations which seek to dishonor you. The sad reality is flashed only the more vividly on men's eyes, that the true reason for which you are persecuted is that deep-seated hatred which the world cherishes against the Catholic Church, the City of God; that the real intention is, if possible, to nullify in society the reparative action of Jesus Christ from which such beneficent and salutary results universally flow. No one is ignorant of the fact that the religious of both sexes form a chosen body in the City of God; that they represent particularly the spirit and the mortifications of Jesus Christ; that by the practice of the Evangelical Counsels they tend to carry Christian virtue to the summit of perfection and that, in a multitude of ways, they powerfully second the action of the Church. Hence, it is not astonishing that today, as in other times, under other iniquitous forms, the City of the World rises against them, and chiefly those men who, by a sacrilegious compact, are most intimately united and most servilely bound to Him who is Prince of this world.

It is clear that they consider the dissolution and extinction of religious orders as a successful manoeuvre in the furthering of their deep-laid designs of driving the Catholic nations into the ways of apostasy and alienation from Jesus Christ and because of that We may say, in all truth: "Blessed are you because you are hated and persecuted." It is only because you have chosen your kind of life out of love for Jesus Christ.

If you followed the maxims and the ways of the world, the world would not trouble you, but would shower its favors upon you. "If you had been of the world, the world would love its own"; but because you are walking in opposite

ways you are assailed and warred against. It is because the world hates you. Christ himself foretold it. Hence, he regards you with all the more love and predilection as He sees you more like Himself in your suffering for justice sake. But if you partake of the suffering of Christ, rejoice. Aspire to the courage of those heroes who went from the presence of the Council rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Acts, Chap. 5, 41). To this glory which comes from the testimony of your conscience, there is added, though you do not seek it, the blessing of all honest men. All those who have at heart the peace and prosperity of their country are aware that there are no more honorable citizens, no more useful men, no more devoted patriots than the members of religious congregations, and they tremble at the thought of losing in you so many precious advantages which depend upon your existence. There are the throngs of the poor, the abandoned and the unfortunate for whose sake you have founded and sustained every variety of establishment with supreme intelligence and admirable charity. There are the fathers of families who have entrusted their sons to you, and who, until the present moment, relied upon you to impart that moral and religious education which is strong, vigorous and fruitful in solid virtue, and which was never more needed than in our time. There are the priests who find in you valuable auxiliaries in their important and laborious ministry. There are the men of all ranks who, in these times of apostasy, find useful direction and encouragement in your advice, backed as it is by the integrity of your lives. There are, above all, the bishops who honor you with their confidence, and who consider you as tried teachers of their younger clergy, and who recognize in you the true friends of their brothers and their people, offering as you do for them to the di-