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GENERAL INTENTION FOR JANUARY.

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for all Associates.*

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

RELIGIOUS Communities are a prominent feature of Catholic life. Beside their number and variety, which are considerable, there is a special sacredness, attaching to them in the minds of the faithful, which must strike the outside observer as remarkable. It begets confidence as well as respect. It is due to the fact that the members of these communities have "left the world and consecrated themselves to God." That is how we express the thing among ourselves. We mean, more particularly, that they have shut themselves out, by the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, from an otherwise lawful exercise of dominion over self and over possessions, and that they have bound themselves to the pursuit and practice of *perfection* in the Christian life. The rules of the community, the life in common under a superior and employment in good work, whether of prayer and contemplation or of spiritual or temporal mercy, are the recognized means of