

*My Lord,*

In tendering our sincere thanks for the honor conferred upon us by your Lordship's presence here to-day, we also wish to take advantage of this auspicious event to recall the humble beginnings of a work visibly blessed by Providence.

In June 1866 while the Children of Mary of the Congregation of Notre Dame were making up altar linens for poor churches, a pious priest sought to awaken renewed zeal in this time-honored custom by reminding his hearers of the destitute condition of some country churches, and the sad straits to which necessity often brought poor missionaries; this tale of woe found an echo in a devoted daughter of Mother Bourgeois; this zealous religious fully imbued with the traditional spirit of that revered Foundress whose one motto was "Charity" sought to exercise this heaven blessed virtue towards the Divine Prisoner who through boundless love for man, "on earthly shrines remains."

A plan was soon drawn up and submitted to the head of the Diocese who lent a willing hand in this labour of love; your Lordship's blessing is a forerunner of success, the clergy answered the appeal after the Diocesan retreat, the priests were registered amongst the first members, since that the good work has spread to twenty dioceses and it reckons thirteen hundred associates.

This glance at the last ten years reveals more than one vacancy among the earnest promoters of the Tabernacle Society. The valiant soul who founded it, fought unto the last the good fight of the Lord's chosen ones, her heavenly Patron was that Blessed Spirit whom the church designates "standing at the right hand of the altar of Incense," This glorious archangel will have unfolded to the Faithful Spouse the glories of that Heavenly Home where her loving children often raise their sorrowing hearts. Some months ago a worthy successor was also called to her reward. These trials may sadden us, my Lord, but they likewise strengthen the mighty bonds that bind us to the Congregation of Notre Dame. This special realm of Mary has been for many the home of their youth, and for all the guardian of our holiest traditions.