

Undoubtedly you could not testify your gratitude to God in a more lovely manner. And what do you not owe to a God so good? If you are blest with excellent parents, worthy pastors, clever masters and able mistresses are you not indebted to Him for all? But by thus endeavouring to make Him known and loved by His creatures you discharge your debt as far as it is in your power.

You do more; by such generous conduct you draw down on you and on the persons who are dear unto you, new graces, new favours. And will not God bless children who already glorify Him, when others scarcely know Him? children who devote to the most noble of institutions, years which others pass in dissipation and frivolous amusements.

In short, beloved children, allow us to say it, in those evil times, you are the hope of religion and society. What indeed should we not expect from children who thus early evince such charity? How, after having manifested such admirable zeal when young, will you not still be the support of good works at a more advanced age? After having been the resources of brothers unfortunate and unknown, will you not be the protectors of others nearer and dearer? They who refuse to concur in a work the object of which is so noble, the destiny so sublime, little understand then their own interest and that of their country. As for you, beloved children, esteem yourselves happy to be born in a country which has witnessed the foundation of the Holy Childhood, an institution the most interesting and perhaps the most wonderful of modern times. Consider yourselves still happier for having been called by Divine Providence to take part therein. For patrons, you have the supreme