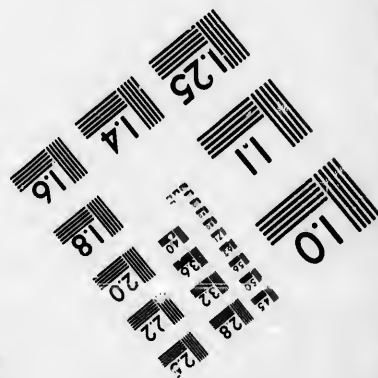
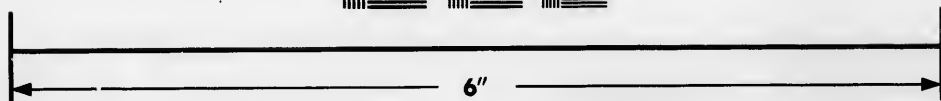
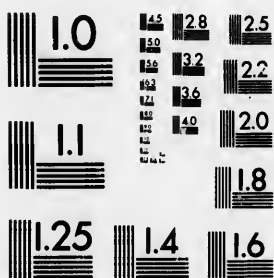


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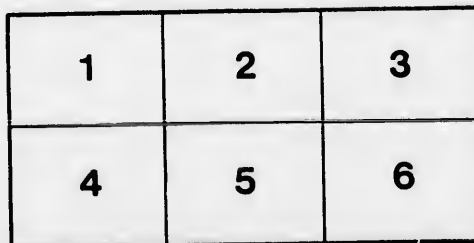
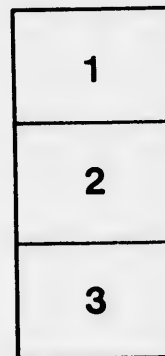
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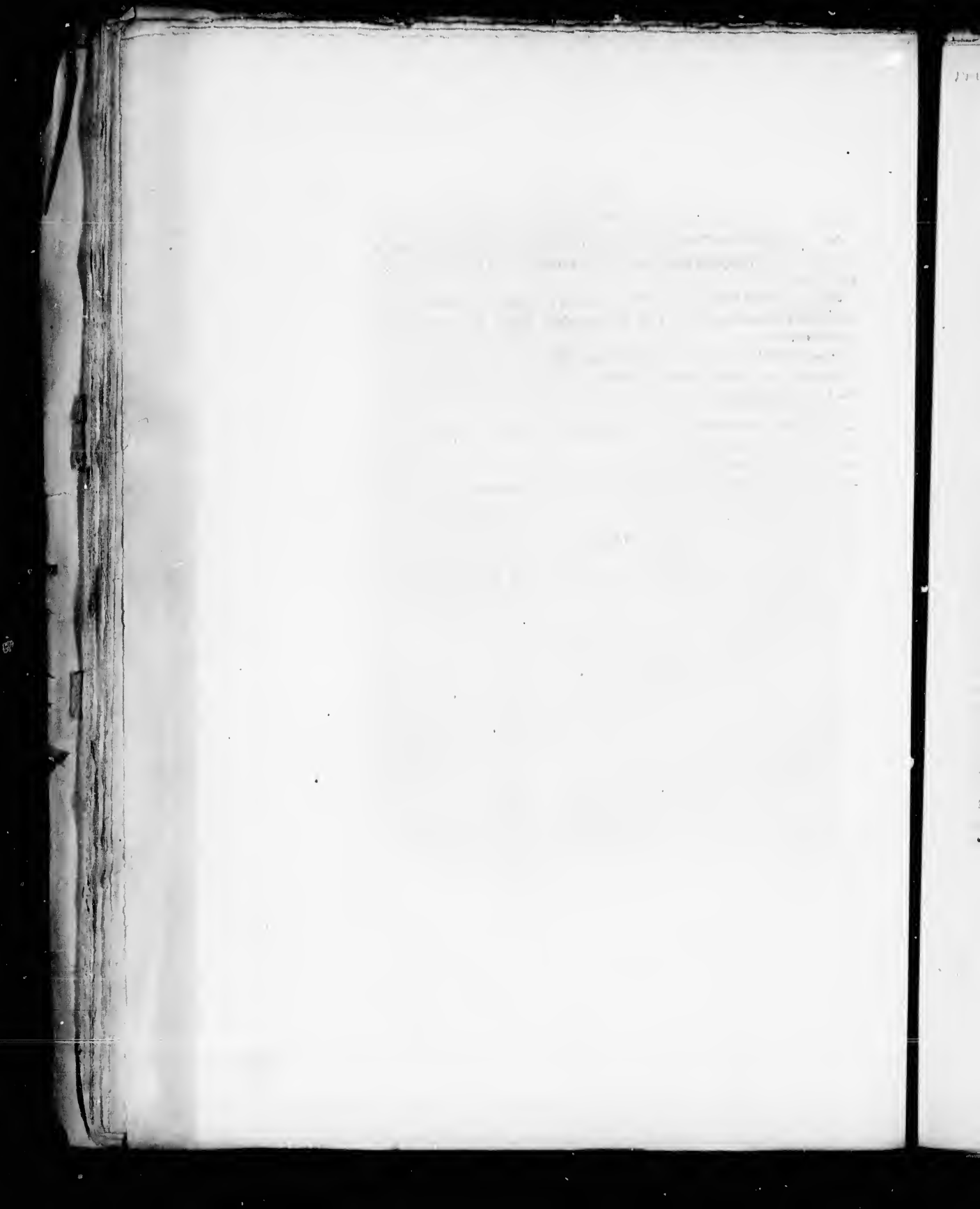
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PASTORAL LETTER

of the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, assembled
at Montreal.

We the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, assembled at Montreal, &c., to the Clergy and the Faithful of the said Province, Greeting and Blessing in Our Lord Jesus-Christ.

We feel happy, dearly beloved brethern, in being able to lay before you to-day the result of our deliberations, commenced on the morning of the first day of May, that delightful month which the tender piety of a great number among you have contributed to make one lovely and continued holiday. It was in the blessed sanctuary of Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours that, accompanied by a great number of the clergy, we commenced our session on the very day that the faithful entered upon the pious exercises of the month of Mary. That, dearly beloved brethern, which has exclusively engaged our attention during our several meetings, was our solicitude to preserve intact the sacred deposit of your faith, which has been confided to our pastoral vigilance, and for which we may shortly have to render a strict account. For we expect above all others to be judged more severely on that dreadful day when the just judge will give to each one accordingly to his works. "*For the time is that judgement should begin at the house of God.*" *Tempus est ut incipiat iudicium à domo Dei* (1st Peter IV, 17). "*For a most severe judgement shall be for them that bear rule.*" *Judicium durissimum his qui præsunt, fiet* (Wisdom VI, 6). We only will be strengthened and sheltered from the strokes of God's inexorable justice, when he will demand an account of our administration, by our being enabled to say in all truth with the Apostle, that we have laboured with our whole might to prevent the faith from failing. "*I have preserved the faith.*" *Fidem servavi* (2 Tim. IV. 7).

Alas! have we not reason to apprehend that we will be unable to bring this consoling testimony, to the foot of that tribunal, at which justice itself shall be

judged? For ravenous wolves have entered into our fold, and from their threatening attitude, we have reason to fear that they are seeking to devour our cherished flock. This it is, which often fills us with alarm, and which, after the severe labours of the day, disturbs our nocturnal repose.

These ravenous wolves are those bad books, which have at the present time more circulation than ever in the world, and which, by their erroneous doctrines, deprive the Good Shepherd of many souls whom a blind security prevents from seeing their danger. These bad books, which you will permit us to specify, dearly beloved brethern, are those spurious bibles, those immoral sheets, those lying pamphlets, those irreligious journals, these publications inimical to all order, which are typified by those clouds of locusts, which St. John saw arising from the bottomless abyss like a black smoke, tormenting, with all the strength and virulence of the scorpion, the wicked who blush to wear, on their impious foreheads, the sign of the living God. "*And from the smoke of the pit there came out locusts upon the earth,*" *De fumo putei exierunt locustæ in terram* (Apoc. IX. 3.). Do not suffer into your houses, any of those bad books which hell is daily belching forth from its broiling entrails, in order to seduce the nations and enrol them under the standard of Satan, and thus prepare them for the great combat which is waging against the living God. If you do, you will be nurturing so many serpents in the bosom of your families, and which, reposing with your tender and innocent children, will not fail to corrupt their principles and deprave their hearts.

Put no trust, dearly beloved brethern, in these deceivers who affect so much zeal to induce you to read the word of God in those bibles which they hawk about in all directions, like ordinary merchandize without any charge. These men are evidently those sanguinary wolves, who are disguised under the garb of sheep in order that they may the more noiselessly insinuate themselves into the fold of Christ, and there commit frightful carnage among his cherished flock. For it is evident that every spurious bible, were it to contain but one single error, is no longer the word of God, but a damnable book, a thousand times more dangerous than those good liquors into which a single drop of poison has been infused. Who is there so rash as to endanger his life for the pleasure of tasting the deceitful sweetness of poisoned drinks. Ah! is it possible that persons will remain so careless, when the life of the soul is at stake, and so diligent, when there is only question of that of the body?

Do not read therefore those bibles, without notes and approved interpretation, which are offered you by your enemies. For the Apostle St. Peter warns us that there are in the Holy Scriptures, passages hard to be understood, which ignorant or

badly-disposed persons interpret in a false sense not only to their own, but also to the spiritual destruction of their brethern. "*Which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition.*" *Quæ indocti et instabiles depravant, sicut et ceteras scripturas, ad suam ipsorum perditionem* (II. Pet. III. 16). Keep your doors closed against those numerous tracts which are like dust which the wind agitates and blows about in all directions. They are the production of those men who, in 1837, declared, in their speeches and letters, that the time was arrived to gain over to their party the catholics of Canada, because they had lost all confidence in their priests. Experience, however proved that this was an impudent calumny. You may rest assured, dearly beloved brethern, that it is the pestiferous breath of these wicked doctrines, which scatters in every direction those swarms of productions, as insidious as the spirit of error from whence they sprung. They are truly those mists which emerge so abundantly from the caverns of hell, to obscure by their gloomy darkness the horizon of your happy country, so pure and so steadfast in the faith even in these latter times. Will you suffer a breach to be made in the faith of your fathers? Oh! no: on the contrary you will bequeath to your children this ancient faith as their most precious inheritance. Your posterity too in passing away into the realms of immortality will hand down to their successors, with veneration and respect all the traditions of our holy religion. "*Our Fathers have declared to us.*" *Patres nostri annuntiaverunt nobis* (Ps. XLIII. 2).

Keep your ears closed then against the seductive speeches of those designing men, who pretend to have your interests at heart, in order that they may induce you to forget the respect and obedience which you owe to your lawful pastors. You will recognise them by their proceedings, and by the striking characteristics which St. Jude has ascribed to them. "*These are clouds without water which are carried about by winds; trees of the autumn, unfruitful, twice dead, plucked up by the roots*" (Jude 12).

How strong are these expressions and how calculated to give us an idea of the continued agitation of the enemies of God and the barrenness of their works! "*These are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars*" (Ibid. 13). How tempestuous is the sea of our passions when agitated against God and against his Christ! What madness then to embark upon it with the certainty of being shipwrecked! Who will dare to collect that filth which taints its shore, namely those writings which contain so much poison and malice. "*These are wandering stars to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever*" (Ibid). What human pen could so well describe the character of these wicked men, who

proclaim themselves publicly as the guides of the people, who are incessantly revolting against all authority, and rushing into those fearful commotions, which shake or destroy society. "*These are murmurers full of complaints, walking according to their own desires, and their mouth speaketh proud things*" (Ibid. 16).

By these works, dearly beloved brethern, you will discern the enemies of God, and shun them with horror. "*Shun these.*" *Hos devita.* They affect indeed a profound respect for the religion of their fathers, but it is by their works and not by their professions that you are to judge them. Do they march at your head on the path of religious duty? Do they accompany you to the confessional? Do they shew you the road to the holy table? "*By their fruits you shall know them.*" *A fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.*

If you listen to them, they will tell you that they respect religion with their whole soul, and that it is only of the faults of its ministers they complain. As for you, dearly beloved brethern, what must you think of those unnatural children who despise their fathers and who affirm that they sincerely love a religion which commands them to honour their parents? Are they not, in your eyes, monsters accursed of God and men. For it is unnecessary to remind you that the priest is the father of the parish, the bishop father of the diocess, and the Pope father of the entire Church. Consider then how enormous a crime it is to insult them, and to endeavour to misrepresent them.

Some priests, you will say, have given scandal. Undoubtedly they have. St. Peter was weak; St. Paul was a persecutor, and others too were faithless. But does it follow from this, that you are permitted to attack the whole body? Assuredly not. Otherwise the Angels would merit abuse, for there were bad ones in heaven. Judas did not tarnish in any manner the glory of the sacred college, and the holy apostles, although they were cowardly and pusillanimous, during the passion of their good master, were not the less worthy of veneration for having so nobly expiated their fault, by boldly and fearlessly preaching the faith to all nations. It is not out of place to say here with St. John: "*If any one says that he is without sin, he is a liar.*" Yes, dearly beloved brethern, we avow that we are all sinners, and therefore we must admire the infinite mercies of God who wishes to save you through the means of our ministry and who, for that purpose, has attached a certain respect to us, which cannot be slighted, without slighting God himself. "*He who despices you despices me.*" *Qui vos spernit me spernit.*

In order to instil into the minds of the people the hatred and contempt which they have sworn against the priests, they have collected into their journals, the filth of all

ages and countries, and have flung it in the face of their clergy, as if they were responsible for the faults of all the clergy in the world, from the days of Judas to the present time. They glory in proclaiming, before their separated brethren, the number of bad priests, bad bishops, and bad popes who have existed. And why all this? Ah! is it not, that they may the more effectually infuse their frightful principles into the minds of the people, and persuade them that they are not bound to pay attention to priests, bishops or popes. And why have they recourse to these tactics? The answer may be given in two words: it is because the clergy use the influence with which Heaven has invested them, for the maintenance of order, and the peace of society; this it is, which these men in their arrogance, cannot endure.

You may rest assured, dearly beloved brethren, that all authority would soon be destroyed, if they would succeed in their destructive projects. For you cannot but know that, when the voice of the priest is no longer listened to, it is in vain for fathers and mothers, judges and magistrates, ministers and kings to raise theirs. Nothing then remains, for the government of families and nations, but brute force, which will not be long available against the passions, when they have lost all restraint. We will then, like other nations in similar circumstances, be plunged into a frightful anarchy, during which men will cut each other's throats, in their struggles for power. And who will be the victims of this dreadful disorder? History but too clearly shews that it is always the poor people. Yes, dearly beloved brethren, you may rest assured that they will be led to destruction, while they are made believe that they are on the road to liberty. Events of a harrowing nature have lately occurred to prove the truth of what we affirm. The thousands of mangled bodies, over which have marched those bloody revolutions, which have lately disturbed Europe, send forth from their tombs a mournful cry which joins in concert with us and warns you that it is the people who, in purse, person and blood, pay the expense of all revolutions. We would be forgetful of the most agreeable of our duties, that of sacrificing ourselves for your happiness both in this world and the next, if we would neglect for a moment to do all our power to preserve you from such misfortunes as these. The Lord has appointed us the sentinels of his people; and for that purpose we are placed on the lofty mountains of Israel in order that we may perceive the enemy at a distance, and sound the tocsin of alarm in time to warn you of the danger. Those, who have so gratuitously declared themselves our enemies, well know this, and therefore they wage against us war to the knife. They seek to cover us with opprobrium, in the face of the entire country, because they know that we effectually use our influence in preserving you in the paths of order and peace. Happy are we, dearly beloved brethren to be enabled to suffer

something for the love of you ! Ah ! how willingly would we lose our lives to preserve you from the woful misfortunes which have befallen so many other people ! May Heaven grant that this land may never be purpled with your blood ! May it run more strong and vigorous in your veins, that you may clear and cultivate and fertilise this country, and thus may you be rewarded a hundred fold, and you and your children be supported in affluence to the last generation.

The enemies of the clergy tell you that it is interest which makes us act as we do. But you are too enlightened to allow them to deceive you by such expressions as these. Undoubtedly we receive from you an honourable subsistence in return for the spiritual services which we render unto you. But, dearly beloved brethren, do you pay nothing to advocates who defend your cause, to doctors who prescribe for your bodily infirmities, to notaries who draw up your acts, to the citizens who make your laws, to the judges who administer them, or to ministers who govern you ? In this, undoubtedly there is nothing unjust. And because we are priests, will any persons have a right to refuse us a just recompense for our services, and endeavour to turn the people against us, as is the case every day, and make them reproach us for the very bread which we eat ? After all, do we not distribute this bread among the widows and orphans ? Is it not towards our mansions that all the misery, which seeks concealment, repairs to be comforted ? Our young country is covered with monuments which clearly attest that we know how to impose sacrifices on ourselves when there is question of the instruction of our people and the comfort of our poor. Sixty-eight public institutions scattered over our cities and country, clearly prove that the interests of the people are identified with our own. Listen to a few words of detail. Eleven colleges or seminaries are dedicated to the higher description of education ; thirteen model schools opened for children by the worthy *Christian Brothers*, who incessantly labour to give them a liberal education, and instil into their minds the principles of religion ; and we confidently expect that from this system, society shall soon reap a rich and abundant harvest ; forty convents, offering to your daughters easy means of learning all that is necessary to make them the glory of their sex, and the honour of your families ; fourteen houses of charity, which have become asylums for all kind of sufferings and where they labour, night and day, to wipe away the tears which the various evils which desolate the country, have caused to flow. May these institutions, for the good of our common country, be daily more and more developed. The warm sympathies which our countrymen generally entertain for them, are too encouraging not to make us cherish the highest expectations. That these expectations should be realised for the happiness of so good a people, is the constant wish of our hearts.

Pardon, dearly beloved brethern, the weakness of which we are guilty by thus eulogising our works. "*I speak foolishly.*" *In insipientia dico* (II Cor. XI. 21). But we find ourselves obliged to do so, that we may close the lips of those enemies of the church who have no hesitation in daily publishing those false compositions, the tendency of which is to inspire you with lamentable prejudices against us, if you were not put on your guard; for when you have lost all confidence in your priests, you will cease to have any in your religion. It is then for you and for your dearest interests, that we raise our voice to-day. In this, we imitate the example of the doctor of the nations, who, on a similar occasion, saw himself reduced to the painful necessity of publishing the graces which the Lord had conferred on him, for increasing the glory of his ministry. However, we repeat to you what the Apostle told the Corinthians, in his defence. It is for love of you and because we have been forced to do so for your sake, that we have consented to be guilty of this folly. "*I am become foolish: you have compelled me.*" *Factus insipiens: vos me coegistis* (II. Cor. XII. 11).

We have pointed out to you, dearly beloved brethern, with all the freedom which the authority of our divine ministry inspired us, the dangers to which your religion is exposed from the reading of bad books, and your intercourse with men who are unsettled in their faith. It remains for us to specify some of the means which in our opinion, are best adapted, in those evil times, to confirm your religious principles. "*In the faith grounded and settled and immoveable.*" *In fide fundati, et stabiles, et immobiles* (Col. I. 23). These means may be reduced to two, namely: *instruction*, by the establishment of parochial libraries, and *practice*, by a new zeal for the excellent work of the Propagation of the Faith. These two words were not considered by the sacred penman, unworthy of being applied to the character of Jesus-Christ. "*Jesus began to do, and to teach.*" *Cæpit Jesus facere et docere.*

The havoc caused by bad books, is bloody and cruel. From them proceeds a destructive pestilence which infects the entire earth. A specific remedy is therefore required; and the apostle in brief but energetic terms points it out to us, when he recommends the reading of good books: "*Attend to reading.*" *Attende lectioni.* It is there that faith finds a brilliant light, and urgent motives why reason should pay obeisance to the Majesty of Heaven. "*A reasonable homage.*" *Rationabile obsequium.* Faith indeed is formed from the preaching of the ministers of religion: "*Faith is from hearing.*" *Fides ex auditu.* It is also to this sublime office of giving instruction, that we have been called by Jesus-Christ, when we were elevated to the episcopacy, which has succeeded the apostleship. Upon us therefore has devolved the task of teaching all nations. "*Teach all nations.*" *Docete*

omnes gentes. Oh! dearly beloved brethren, this function all divine has fallen with full force on our conscience, at that awful moment when the church, during our consecration, imposed on our feeble shoulders the book of the holy gospels. At that moment when our hands, marked with the unctions of the holy oil, were placed upon that divine book, and we listened to the command to preach to those entrusted to our care, our hearts then surely stood in need of being strengthened by an all-powerful grace. "*Preach to the people entrusted unto you : for God is powerful to increase for you his grace.*" *Prædica populo tibi commissio : potens enim est Deus ut augeat tibi gratiam suam* (Pontifical).

We are thus urgent upon this point, dearly beloved brethren, in order that you may properly understand the extreme necessity which obliges you to do all in your power to procure religious instruction, for it is by it that you will be enabled to resist all the efforts which hell is making to tear away from you the sacred deposit of the faith. "*A necessity is incumbent upon me.*" *Necessitas enim mihi incumbit.* This duty is so pressing that the apostles thought themselves obliged to impose upon the seven deacons the care even of the poor, in order that they might have nothing to engage their attention, but the holy exercise of prayer and the sacred ministry of the word. "*But we will be constant in prayer and the ministry of the word.*" *Nos vero orationi et ministerio verbi instantes erimus.* It was to enable them to preach the wonders of God, that the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, descended upon them in the shape of innumerable tongues of fire. "*He appeared to the apostles in innumerable tongues.*" *Apostolis immensis linguis apparuit* (Missal). And why this, if not to give them to understand that all of them should preach, if they wished worthily to discharge the sublime functions of their office. Since then we have succeeded to the apostolic ministry, every action of ours should, as a tongue, preach the law of God. We have already spoken to you by the lips of your pastors, as its from us they receive their mission, and through us the special grace to be enabled to instruct you, just as we ourselves address you with the full authority of the Supreme Head of the Church, who has delegated us. And he himself has received the plenitude of his power, and his graces from Jesus-Christ, that he might confirm all his brethren in the faith. We also address you through those pious teachers of both sexes, whom we have consecrated to God to assist us in pointing out to you the road to heaven.

But this is not sufficient, dearly beloved brethren, to satisfy the ardent desire, which we entertain, to make you shine in all the splendour of your faith, and make you study the science of the saints. We would wish to be with you always and point out to you your duties on every occasion. But this is impossible, for you will

hear our voice and that of our zealous fellow-labourers, announcing to you the grand truths of religion only on Sundays and holidays. To make amends for this inability, we hereby establish in every parish, by the authority which we have received from the Holy and Apostolic See, the *Society for the circulation of Good Books*, a society which our Holy Father Pope Gregory 16th, of happy memory, has been pleased to bless and enrich with precious indulgences, as you may see in the collection of rules which we herewith send to you. By this canonical institution, every parochial library will be another pulpit of truth, and the books, which you shall read, will, like so many tongues of fire, remain in your houses, make them shine with the brilliant light of faith, and enkindle within them the ardour of charity. These well selected books will, like so many mouths, repeat, when you wish, lessons of wisdom from on high. They will be so many mute but eloquent preachers, who will teach you the knowledge, love and service of God, the Creator of all and the salvation of your souls, for this is the principal end of man.

They will inform you, fathers and mothers, of your duties to your children, and of what your children owe to you; and by these means you will be all happy. They will teach you, married christians, how to profit of the abundant blessings, which Heaven has vouchsafed to shower down upon you, on the day of your alliance, in order to sanctify you in a state which God has so much honoured, as to raise it to the dignity of a sacrament of the church. They will enable all of you, who aspire upon earth after the peace of a good conscience, to obtain that felicity promised in heaven to real virtue, and they will instruct you, with certainty, how to make good confessions and fervent communions. They will make known to you all the grievous sins, which would remain concealed in your bosoms. Oh! what consolation will you not experience, when all this load is removed from you.

A good book, in the house of a christian, is a friend who gives prudent advice; a physician that points excellent remedies; a comforter that dries up our tears; a director that points out the road of perfection to those chosen souls whom God has called to a more perfect state of sanctity; a preacher that converts the greatest criminals. And in reality, it was from the reading of good books, that the church has gained for God, an Augustine, an Ignatius of Loyola and so many others who from being great sinners, became illustrious saints. Make the experiment, dearly beloved brethren, and you will soon enjoy the happy fruits. For five shillings a year, you will diffuse abundance and felicity through your houses; for the reading of good books will gradually detach you from those false pleasures which require so much to satisfy them. They will cause simplicity to reign in your habits, what wise economy may you not practise for the interests of your children. For it is

with sorrow that we must here declare that extravagance has been the ruin of many families. Oh ! how weak are parents, when their children solicit them to satisfy their tastes and indulge their propensities. Estimate, if you can, all the expenses which you annually incur for their dress, their rounds and their amusements. With good books, they will learn to dispense with all this ; they will love the paternal roof, and they will seldom quit it, except for labour, or the exercises of religion. Happy will they be if they know but two roads, that to the church and that to the fields which they have to cultivate.

Good books contain a liquor, a thousand times more delicious than that which you have so cordially renounced for the love of Jesus-Christ, and which is infinitely more expensive. They will be the constant companions of your children, and they will keep them apart from those youths who are prone to drunkenness, libertinism, or to blasphemy. They will cause them to love their country, to spend their time of recreation in innocent amusements, with their brothers and sisters, or with those of neighbours. The long winter nights will be passed in singing sweet hymns, in recounting striking incidents of history, or in harmless pastime with yourselves and under your own inspection. You will derive a real felicity by indulging in joys so pure. Are not these family meetings of much more advantage, than those frightful orgies, which have happily nearly altogether dissappeared, and the remembrance of of which you cannot call up, without lamenting them and deploring them before God ?

With morals like these, which will carry you back to the golden age, when your forefathers were so happy, do you not see, dearly beloved brethren, from what heart-rending regrets you will be preserved ? For, when your children are far from you, are you not continually perplexed with anxiety ? You fear with reason that they may meet with some sad accident. You are expecting, every hour of the night, to see them return in a state of intoxication ; you constantly dread the loss of their innocence, in those long and endless meetings, during which the devil hurls into their young hearts those flaming shafts by which evil desires are engendered, and they are thus abandoned to all the sinfulness of a foolish love.

To save you from so many evils, and obtain so much good, will you not cheerfully sacrifice a small sum, for the establishment of a library in your parish, and will you not persevere in sustaining it ? Will you not account it an honour to have there a collection of books, calculated to reform your heart and increase your knowledge ? For, if we are anxious above all things for your spiritual good, we are by no means indifferent to your temporal happiness ; and we will be delighted to see you, parish-library supplied with books, which will enable you to obtain this double object.

What advantages will you not then be in the receipt of! What services will you not be enabled to render to your families, to your parish and to the country in general by the information, which you will have thus acquired.

Moreover all measures are now taken for bringing to a successful issue the project of establishing a library in every parish. God having blessed it by the anointed hands of the Sovereign Pontiff who represents him on earth, it cannot but prosper. It seems as if we were already tasting its delicious fruit. The thought alone that, in a few years, our beloved countrymen will be as industrious as they are virtuous, as frugal as they are liberal, as active as they are honest, as good business-men as they are indefatigable farmers, causes our hearts to beat with joy. For God is witness of the tenderness, with which we love you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. "*For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*" *Testis enim mihi est Deus quomodo cupiam omnes vos in visceribus Jesu-Christi* (Philip. I. 8).

To arrive, as quickly as possible, at such a desirable result, you should employ all the means in your power to promote the education of your children. But, in order that this excellent work may proceed with more rapidity and success, you should not hesitate to pay cheerfully the small contribution, which the law demands for the support of your schools. You should have the less reluctance in making this little sacrifice, inasmuch as the government, prompted by a desire to extend education among the youth of the country, has volunteered to share the expenses equally with yourselves. It is for your interest to avail yourselves of this liberality, which otherwise is husbanded with care by your representatives, the men of your choice and confidence. If others seek to persuade you of the contrary, you may rest assured, that they are either deceiving themselves, or wish to deceive you. The law concerning education is undoubtedly imperfect; but you should profit of the advantages which it offers, and pray that it be so amended as to always exercise a more salutary influence. For it is from God alone that we must look for that wisdom, which enlightens those men, whose duty it is to make laws and govern empires. It is thus that you will contribute to the temporal and spiritual advancement of your country. You surely love your beautiful country too well and are too sincerely interested in its tranquillity, not to consent to sacrifice your own particular views to the general good. Above all things, dearly beloved brethren, *God and our Country*. For in this alone consists the safety of society.

We have already pointed out to you, dearly beloved brethren, many means for stopping up the sources of error and dispelling ignorance, the unhappy parent of so many abominable lies. There is one other enemy from whom you have much to

dread, and against whom it is of importance to put you on your guard ; this is a bad life, which, by a sure process, has engendered more heresies, and destroyed more souls than the darkest ignorance. Indeed your ears, since your most tender infancy, have drunk in that sentence of the apostle St. James : "*Faith without works is dead.*" And consequently that faith, far from justifying, renders us more culpable and more worthy of severe chastisement, if good works do not accompany it. It is our duty then to warn you in charity of your obligation to labour hard to render certain your vocation and election by the practise of all kinds of good works. "*Labour the more, that by good works you make sure your vocation and election.*" *Magis satagite, ut per bona opera certam vestram vocationem et electionem faciatis* (II. Pet. I. 10). Wherefore, we exhort you instantly to embrace with ardour and to favour, by all the means in your power, the good work of the Propagation of the Faith, which is already known to you, and which is the source of innumerable benedictions. This admirable society is filling the world to-day with its glorious deeds, which shine before all nations, and by which Our Heavenly Father is glorified. "*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.*" *Luceat lux vestra coram hominibus, ut videant opera vestra bona, et glorificent patrem vestrum qui in celis est* (Math. V. 16.). Thrown like a grain of mustard upon the earth, scarce thirty years ago, it already has become a great tree, whose branches shelter and whose fruit gives nourishment to the people of every clime and origin. Like to the refreshing fountain of the terrestrial paradise, it too has branched off into four majestic rivers, whose waters fertilize all parts of the old and new world ; and the nations, that thirst after Gospel-truth, are bending over it's banks, to take a long draught of those vivifying waters, which spring up unto life everlasting.

This association, which has come from heaven, and has been blest by the chief pastors of the church, and encouraged by every generous heart, has founded bishopricks, built churches, and established missions, over which, as in the glorious days of the infant church, the blood of martyrs has flowed and has become the seed of new christians. It sends abroad and supports those apostolic men, who like fertilising clouds, cause the dew of heaven to fall down upon those countries, which are dried up arid and parched by infidelity. It causes the wonders of God and the goodness and compassion of his mother to be proclaimed in every tongue. It causes the holy waters of baptism to flow on the heads of thousands, who hitherto stooped under the yoko of Satan. By it innumerable souls are plunged in the sacred pool of penance, where they wash away all the shameful stains of the pagan. It presents to those purified souls, the delicious banquet of the divine eucharist, whose sweetness surpasses

all understanding. In a word it prepares for heaven a countless number of souls, whom ignorance and the force of their passions were hurrying towards the everlasting abyss of hell.

What catholic heart is there, that does not throb with delight at the simple recital of the immense good, effected by this incomparable society? Who is there amongst you who does not wish, even by the most painful sacrifice to be able to share in its immense benefits? However our good and holy mother the church does not require for this object but the daily recital of one *pater* and *ave* and the weekly subscription of one half-penny. Are there amongst us any christian negligent as not to take a part in such an excellent work? Alas! there are many who but little comprehend how important is the salvation of souls, that work above all others, to effect which a God became incarnate and died upon a cross.

We have reason indeed, dearly beloved brethren, to reproach our country so eminently catholic with this deplorable indifference, over which we should shed tears of blood. Thanks to the infinite mercy of God and the zeal of the clergy, the society for the propagation of the faith has existed among us for a length of time, and we can point with delight to the good which it has effected. However we must confess that it is not so generally established as it should be; and it is for this reason that we raise our voice today, and implore you to come forward and assist us in zealously guarding the faith, which your fathers implanted in this country and which they have bequeathed to us as the most precious inheritance. Surely you will not resist all the motives which we have adduced, influenced as we are by the ardent charity of Jesus-Christ, which compels us to neglect nothing which may contribute to the preservation of this sacred deposit. There is now question of guarding for yourselves this inestimable treasure. But the most easy and certain means of realising this object, is to labour zealously to communicate the faith to others, no matter to what country or nation they may belong. For in a heart truly catholic, people of all nations, origins and customs, find a place, all distinctions are there lost and blended together; one thing alone remains and that is the comprehensive charity which makes us love the whole world for the sake of God. A people who impart the faith to others, by prayer and offerings, perform a work more agreeable to Heaven than if they supported all the poor in the world. If then, as you have no reason to doubt, one cup of cold water, given for the love of God, may procure for you everlasting life, what recompense will not that charitable zeal merit, which causes a stream of living water to flow, by which those poor souls, who are plunged in the darkness of error or infidelity, will have their thirst assuaged? Is it possible for a nation of apostles to live without faith? Oh! no, assuredly not. On

the contrary, the more efforts it will make to carry abroad the divine light of the gospel and make it shine before the nations of the earth, the more firm and lively will its own faith become.

Of this we have a very striking illustration in France, whence our forefathers came to evangelize this country and bring it under the yoke of religion. For to what can be attributed the preservation of the faith, in the midst of the most fearful commotions, which for more than half a century have convulsed that empire and overturned three thrones, and all the forms of popular government, which they attempted to establish? Is it not clearly to that lively faith, which, despite the impiety of a considerable number, is still deeply rooted in its soil? This place so much disturbed, where sceptres and human institutions were broken to pieces like vessels of clay, still retains its faith, only because it has imparted it to others. Every year, we see a zealous band of apostolic men departing from it and dividing amongst them the world of infidelity. To sustain them in the labours of their painful ministry, the hands of thousands are raised towards heaven: from the lips of thousands, is heard the cry of prayer to the sacred heart of Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith: through the charitable aid of numbers of christians, the stream of charity flows over far-distant lands where the efforts of missionaries keep always burning the lamp of truth. But suppose, which God forbid, that religion would take her departure from us, and go to distribute her blessings among a more faithful people, what think you, dearly beloved brethren, would be the result? That which is always the case, when irreligion obtains the ascendancy. You would see your priests massacred or expatriated, your churches prophaned, your beautiful festivals abolished. And then, you would no longer have any pastors to purify your infant children in the holy waters of baptism, to instruct them in their duties towards you and their God, to initiate them in the mysteries of religion, to absolve them from their sins or to nourish them with the Bread of angels. Alas! on the contrary, these poor children of yours would be consigned to the instruction of irreligious teachers, who would use their best endeavours to pervert their understanding and deprave their heart. And as to yourselves, you would not have any longer amongst you the man of God to comfort you, when plunged in grief; to point out to you the road to heaven, when you have wandered from it; to reconcile you to your offended God, when you have the misfortune to sully your innocence by the stains of sin; to break to you the bread of strength when you are weak; to carry to you the consolations of religion when you are on the eve of your departure from this world; to sprinkle, over your grave, blessed water mingled with tears, when your body is about to be lowered there, and rest beneath the shadow of the cross, to await the awful day of resurrection; to

follow you after your departure into that unknown world upon which you will have entered, holding in his hand the chalice filled with the blood of the spotless lamb, to supplicate your Sovereign Judge to grant you a place of refreshment, repose and peace.

These details assuredly make you tremble and you would not for worlds expose yourselves and your children to calamities so dreadful. This however is but a feeble sketch of the horrors which the same cause produced in other countries. It is of the utmost importance to us then to do all in our power to prevent them from blighting this land of ours. But what, dearly beloved brethren, is the surest preventative against this? Let us repeat it to you, it is a zeal for the propagation of the faith. God will love you, if you love and practise religion. He will never deprive you of its advantages, if you use your best endeavours to extend it and make it flourish in those countries which, up to the present time, are buried in the shadow of death. But even, were this great misfortune not to be dreaded for this country, there are many other motives which ought to augment and inflame your zeal for this delightful work; but there is one which appears to us paramount, and which cannot fail to make an impression upon you. It is this, that in augmenting the funds of this society, you place it in the condition of being able to increase the services of religion, which it is all important to procure for your countrymen, in order to enable them to settle themselves down on this soil, which Divine Providence has bequeathed to us, as a part of our inheritance. You will easily understand that we wish to make allusion to the colonisation of the uncultivated crown-lands, which are offered to you by government upon the most advantageous terms. We have no occasion to inform you that thousands of your fellow-countrymen are at this present time languishing in the country of the stranger whither they repaired in quest of a subsistence; that more than twenty thousand of our young men expose themselves to the painful labour of lumbering establishments, in order to avoid leaving their country. In the mean time, thousands of acres of excellent land are but waiting for strong and vigorous arms to clear away the primeval forests, which cover them, and thus reward a hundredfold the labours of the industrious farmer. It is of importance then to direct to this quarter those countrymen of ours who contemplate emigration, and thus retain them in the bosom of our own country, which is sufficiently capacious and rich to contain and support a much larger population. But the most efficacious means unquestionably to attain this object, is to procure for the new colonists, as much religious aid as possible, by which they may be comforted in their parishes. It is principally to effect this object, that you should endeavour to aid the society for the propagation of the faith.

Another work worthy of your best endeavours is to procure the same happiness for a great number of your fellow-countrymen, who are scattered along our immense frontiers and who are reduced to a frightful spiritual destitution. Where, notwithstanding all the advantages which have been promised them, they live like wandering sheep, without churches and pastors. Alas! the pleasures of our religious festivals are unknown to them. They see no more the glistening spire of their parish church, which so much charmed their eyes in the lovely days of their infancy! They no longer listen to the blessed sounds of their harmonious bells, which made their young hearts vibrate with tender sentiments of piety. Our affecting ceremonies are no longer displayed in all their majestic grandeur, before their melting eyes! The voice of their pastors, from whom they had learned to lisp the name of God, no longer delights their ears. Oh! how listless must they be in the land of the stranger, where they can no longer repeat those sweet hymns which, when here, they sang with so much joy. Like to the unfortunate children of Israel, wandering along the banks of the rivers of Babylon, so do they weep bitterly at the recollection of their fathers, who live but for them; of their mothers who count, with their tears, the long moments of their absence; of their friends and neighbours whose society was so agreeable! This sad lament of your countrymen far from their native soil, undoubtedly awakes in you a love of home and unalterably determines you in always remaining here. You should also desire to see returning so many relatives and friends, whose separation from you has caused you so much regret. May the hour of their return to their families and friends, soon arrive!

You entertain moreover a lively interest for those young and industrious men who, in hopes of realizing the means of future support, go to labour in those lumbering establishments, which are opened in all parts of our vast forests. You should also desire, that they may be able, after many years of painful labour, to repose from their dangers, not far from the place of their birth, and settle down on some land, which they will have purchased with they money, which they struggled so hard to earn.

It is then, dearly beloved brethren, for the interest of one and all of you, that we so strongly exhort you to favour colonisation. But, as in the removal of obstacles, the united efforts of many will have the most success, we think it right, to urge upon you the necessity of forming, for this object, certain associations, such as already exist in the country, and a knowledge of which your pastors will feel much pleasure in imparting to you. If we so strongly recommend this to you, it is because there is nothing which could so delight our heart, as to see you remaining with us on this land, which has been prepared for you by Divine Providence, and there enjoying

happiness and comfort linked to those patriarchal virtues which have been bequeathed to you by your fathers.

You may observe, dearly beloved brethren, that, in preserving the faith amongst you, we make use of means entirely opposite to those which hell employs to overturn it. In a word, to those men who blaspheme and curse, we oppose those who pray and love; to immoral books, we oppose holy ones; to impious journals, or the enemies of our faith, we oppose religious papers favourable to no political party but solely devoted to the interests of catholicity so much attacked now-a-days; for we here solemnly declare, that we do not intend to share in the quarrels of party: our mission is too sublime to permit us to descend into the arena of human passions. To secret societies and those concealed in mysticism, we oppose those associations which shew themselves in midday, under the glorious standard of the cross.

God, dearly beloved brethren, condemns and his Church hurls against these secret societies her severest anathemas, undoubtedly because they are ranged under the infernal banners of the devil. In vain do they perform external acts of benevolence and render each other mutual support. They evidently do this, in order that they may the more effectually deceive good but unthinking souls: in this they imitate the example of their father who transforms himself into an angel of light that he may, with more certainty, seduce the unfortunate children of Adam.

These societies are presided over by wicked and designing men who contrive to deceive their brethren, by excluding them from those secret and dark meetings, where they concoct together the most wicked projects against religion and society. Never enrol yourselves in any of these dangerous associations, which have caused and still cause the old world to be afflicted with so many calamities; or, if you had the misfortune to enter any of them, haste and take your departure, for they are true Babylons stricken with the maledictions of heaven. They are like the tower of Babel, which was built by arrogant men, who wished to satisfy their ambition at any cost. Amongst them reigns a spirit of disturbance and disorder, their tongues are confounded, they do not understand one another, or at most they agree only on one point, and that is when there is question of making war against God and his saints. Fly then from their Babylon which is the metropolis of the king of hell. "*Flee ye from the midst of Babylon, and let every one save his own life.*" *Fugite de medio Babylonis, et salvet unusquisque animam suam* (Jer. LI. 6). As far as we are concerned, may the Lord prevent us from observing silence on the dark and dreadful plots of these insensate men; for, if we remain tranquil in the sight of danger, we will infallibly share in the punishments, with which he threatens his enemies. "*Be not silent on her iniquity: for it is the time of*

revenge from the Lord." Nolite tacere super iniquitatem ejus; quoniam tempus ultionis est à Domino (Ibid.).

You may now understand, dearly beloved brethren, the powerful motives which ought to impel you to come to our support, by fervent prayer and the other means which we have pointed out. "*I beseech you, therefore, brethren....that you assist me in your prayers for me....that I may be delivered from the unbelievers.*" *Obsecro ergo vos, fratres....ut adjuvetis me in orationibus vestris per me....ut liberer ab infidelibus (Rom. XV. 30).* These prayers, we ask of you, in order that we may obtain the blessings of heaven, not only for those projects of which we have spoken to you, but also for those which will engage our attention until our next regular assembly. On this subject, we feel much pleasure in announcing to you that this assembly, which will be the first Council of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, will be opened at Quebec on the 15th of August 1851, the festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. We have chosen this day so glorious for Mary, that our deliberations, opened under her auspices, may be more agreeable to her divine Son, and receive a special and full protection. In the mean time let your prayers be raised in unison with ours to the throne of Eternal Wisdom to beseech God to grant us some of that heavenly light, of which we will stand so much in need, in order that the measures, which we then may adopt, may more and more redound to the glory of God, and the happiness of that part of the flock of Jesus-Christ, which has been entrusted to our care.

In thus soliciting your prayers, dearly beloved brethren, we do so with the more confidence that we have this day under our eyes, a remarkable proof of the value attached to the prayers of the faithful. For it was during the time we were assembled in this city, for your most important interests, that we received the great and joyous news of the return to Rome of our Holy Father the Pope. We were for a moment forgetful of all trouble and fatigue, and we gave way to the transports of our joy on learning that happy event, which is a true triumph for the faith, and which appears so providential as to disconcert all views of human prudence. For who could have inspired the French Republic with the resolution of overturning the Roman Republic? Who could have breathed into the heart of a people, who were after demolishing the throne of their King, that noble courage which they displayed in the reestablishment of the temporal throne of the King of the Eternal City? It was evidently God, whose powerful hand subdues the will of nations as easily as that of a single individual; for it is he who inspires every generous resolution and supplies the means by which it may be carried into execution. But to what cause are we to attribute this visible interposition of Divine Providence, in favour of the

successor of Jesus-Christ, if not to the prayers of the entire church? Indeed for these last sixteen months, the whole world has resounded with prayers and supplications addressed to heaven for the Father of the Christian Family exiled in a foreign land. These humble entreaties have been listened to and heard. This ought to be so, dearly beloved brethren; for to day, as in the time of St. Peter, Jesus-Christ loves his church and consequently he could not refuse her this favour, which she demanded with so much earnestness for her much cherished father. It is then true, that after eighteen hundred years, and for her two hundredth and fifty seventh pastor, the holy church has been listened to by God, as she was in the lovely days of her infancy, in the person of Peter, the first successor of Jesus-Christ.

Let us rejoice then, dearly beloved brethren; for no one of the true children of the church ought to remain sad, when his holy mother is in transports of joy. Let us have confidence, for the arm of God is not shortened. The bark of Peter may be tossed about on the ocean of this world, but it can never perish. Let us remain then in this bark, which has resisted so many storms for these last eighteen hundred years, and which never can suffer shipwreck. And as God has vouchsafed to hear our prayers united with those of the entire church, let us join her to day in expressing the sentiments of our most lively gratitude and repeating that sacred hymn which the immortal Pius 9th intoned, with such sweet and touching emotion, on the 12th of April last, in the magnificent basilic of St. Peter, to celebrate his return to that people, whom wicked men had deceived and led astray. Let us sing that hymn of thanks which will resound in every temple, from the rising to the setting sun, wherever there is a catholic heart; for every son of the church must be sensible of the new favours conferred upon her, in the person of her chief.

For this purpose, we ordain that on the first sunday (*) after the reception of this letter, a solemn *Te Deum* be sung, at the end of morning service, as an act of thanksgiving for the re-establishment of the head of the Church on the pontifical throne, and that it be followed by the prayer *Pro gratiarum actione*, to which will be added the prayer *Deus refugium, &c.*, to obtain from heaven assistance and aid of which he is now in as much need as ever, placed as he is in the midst of difficulties, bequeathed to him by those wicked men, who brought so many calamities upon the capital of the christian world.

We conclude this letter, dearly beloved brethren, by earnestly wishing with the Apostle, that the God of peace may be with you always. *Deus autem pacis sit cum omnibus vobis* (Rom. 31.).

(*) N. B.—If this Pastoral Letter is only read in parts, it will be better to read, on the first sunday after its reception, that part which has reference to the return of the Pope to Rome.

This pastoral letter shall be read and published at the prone in all parish and conventual churches, and in the chapter of all religious communities.

Given at the Bishop's Palace, Montreal, under our hand and seal, and the countersign of the Secretary of our assembly, the 11th day of May 1850.

- + P. F. BISHOP OF SIDYME, COADJ. OF QUEBEC AND ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ARCHDIOCESS.
- + IG. BISHOP OF MONTREAL.
- + PATRICK, BISHOP OF CARRHA, COADJ. AND ADM. OF KINGSTON.
- + J. C. BISHOP OF MARTYROPOLIS, COADJ. OF MONTREAL.
- + JOS. EUGENE, BISHOP OF BYTOWN.

By Their Lorships command,

C. F. CAZEAU, Pst.,
Secretary.

(True copy.)

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MINISTRATOR

INGSTON.

Prs.,
Secretary.

Secretary.

