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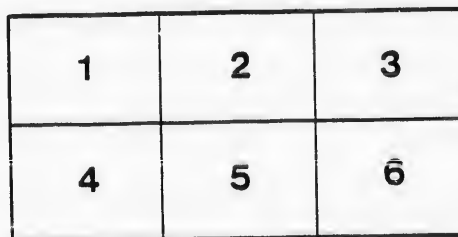
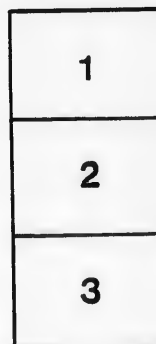
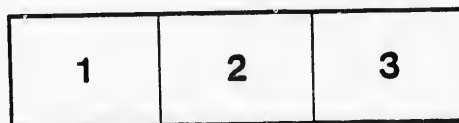
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CIRCULAR TO THE CLERGY
OF THE
VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF PONTIAC.

10. Our Hopes. — 20. The Association of St. Francis of Sales. —
30. The Propagation of the Faith. — 40. Powers. — 50. Dispensations.
— 60. Collection for the Pope. — 70. The sixth Council of Quebec. —
80. Our wishes.

PEMBROKE, 21st December 1882.

I. OUR HOPES.

Dearlly Beloved Colleagues,

Three months have now elapsed since we received episcopal consecration. Having taken up an abode in this city of Pembroke, chosen by us as the place of our residence, and having recovered from the deep emotions produced in ourselves by the imposing ceremonies of the 21st September, with the spirit of calm restored to our mind, it became our duty to cast our eyes about us and study the situation which Heaven had made for us. We came to understand more than ever the importance and the difficulties of the work entrusted to our pastoral efforts, the immense extent of the territory placed under our jurisdiction, the multiplicity of needs under which our young Vicariate labors, as well as the slenderness of the resources at our disposal to meet so many wants. Without going into a lengthy examination, we saw at

once the amount of work, fatigue and privation reserved for us in the accomplishment of the task laid upon our shoulders.

Neither this spectacle, however, nor the sense of our own weakness, can either crush or even lessen our courage. Sacrifice is the seal and the mainspring of holy and lasting deeds. What is impossible to man's debility is as nothing to the almightiness of God. At the point where human methods terminate, the divine operation begins. The Apostle says : *Videte vocationem vestram, fratres, quia non multi sapientes secundum carnem, non multi potentes, non multi nobiles ; sed quæ stulta sunt mundi elegit Deus ut confundat sapientes et infirma mundi elegit Deus ut confundat fortia, et ignobilia mundi, et contemptibilia elegit Deus, et ea quæ non sunt, ut ea quæ sunt destrueret : ut non gloriatur omnis caro in conspectu ejus.* (I Cor. I. 25-29.) But beyond this, the agreeable relations which we have had with you, Beloved Colleagues in the Holy Ministry, the tokens of respect, and the professions of obedience reaching us from all sides, the favor with which all our flocks have greeted our arrival at the head of this Vicariate, the good wishes and kindnesses daily bestowed upon us by you and the more intimate knowledge which we have acquired of your truly apostolic labors, all unite in showing us that, in the pursuit of our designs, we may implicitly rely upon your zeal and devotion, as well as on the willing cooperation of our Christian people.

II. THE ASSOCIATION OF ST. FRANCIS OF SALES.

Mensis quidem multa, operarii autem pauci. (St. Luke, x. 2). These words of the Saviour may be applied in all

truth to that part of the Lord's vineyard confided to our care, and indeed the dearth of evangelical workmen, Dearly Beloved Colleagues, should be and is the first object of our solicitude. It is true that several young men of this Vicariate are preparing themselves, in different colleges, to embrace the ecclesiastical state ; certain generous souls among you devote their savings to train levites for the holy altars ; we ourselves furnish the means of educating three youths full of promise, but the restricted number of prospective auxiliaries is far from meeting the ever increasing and pressing requirements of the present, and especially of the future. Streams of Catholic immigration are pouring into our borders ; the forest is invaded from all sides ; villages rise as by enchantment along our great line of railway ; missions are being established, and from the depth of their woods, the Indians stretch out suppliant hands, asking for the bread of the divine life and the living waters of the sacramental fountains. Pray the Lord to sow in the hearts of our youths the seed of a holy vocation ; carefully mature those tender plants, so soon as you see them opening to the sunshine of grace ; encourage fathers and mothers to make sacrifices in favor of such of their sons as have a leaning for the ecclesiastical state, and above all supplicate together the Master of the Harvest to vouchsafe to send numerous and diligent laborers in his fields. *Rogate ergo dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in messem suam.* (St. Luke, x. 2).

To favor the development of ecclesiastical vocations among young men who are not endowed with the gifts of fortune, and to meet the expenses entailed by years spent in the seminary, we have found established in this ancient portion of the diocese of Ottawa, the Associa-

tion of St. Francis of Sales, and we rejoice thereat. It is destined to produce great fruits; the conditions of application are easy and it offers numerous spiritual advantages.

We pronounce a blessing from our heart on this pious association and recommend it in a special manner to your most ardent zeal. Explain thoroughly to your parishioners the sublimity of its object and the plenitude of heavenly favors which it may draw down upon them. Above all see that children take an interest in it. The alms fetched by innocent hands produce a double fruit. In furtherance of this view, you will take advantage of the catechetical lessons, when you have the children directly in your hands, and you should aid their intelligence and incline their will to your pleasure; you will also attend to the opportunity of parochial visits, when all the families lay open to you their houses, their purses and their heart. Who knows, perhaps a word of yours, unconsciously spoken, may give birth to a secret vocation, that will blossom with time. Every year in the month of December, you will forward to us at Pembroke the amount of the contributions placed in your hands.

You will receive with the present circular the new formula prescribed on the 7th. of July last, to give the *general absolution* to such as are entitled to it. Those who are entitled to this favor are all the members of the Association of St. Francis of Sales who wear the seraphic cordon.

III. THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

The Association of St. Francis of Sales will give pastors to the Church of Pontiac; the Society of the Pro-

pagation of the Faith will supply it with new sheep, snatched from the jaws of the infernal lion and the path of perdition.

It is heartrending to reflect that, in the northern portions of this Vicariate, under the shadow of our great woods, in the midst of our labyrinth of mountains, on the banks of our numberless lakes, there wander savage tribes still wrapped in the darkness of idolatry. Doubtless, zealous priests have undergone much fatigue and made great sacrifices to form flourishing missions in those distant parts, thus showing to the world, once again, that in the Church of God, the spirit of the Apostles is ever alive. But the lack of pecuniary means has prevented them from penetrating everywhere and establishing residences in many places, where they would be necessary to watch the growth of the divine seed sown by them in the souls of the Indians.

Who will send apostles to these disinherited people, who will cause them to hear the word of Jesus-Christ, thus bearing to them the treasures of faith? For, as the apostle says: *Quomodo credent ei, quem non audiverunt? Quomodo autem audient sine prædicante?* (ad Romanos, 10, 14). *Ergo fides ex auditu, auditus autem per verbum Christi* (ad Romanos, 10, 17).

Who will support the existence of these apostolic men in the midst of their labors and ceaseless wanderings? Who will make the holy water of Baptism flow on thousands of heads which have hitherto born no other yoke than that of Satan? Who will build for this poor and destitute people the chapels where they may chant the praises of God, and where they may purify themselves in the pool of salvation and eat the bread of the strong? Who will erect schools where the young gene-

ration may be shaped in a Christian mould ? In one word, who will prepare for heaven an infinite number of souls that ignorance and brutal passions are dragging into the eternal abyss ? Who ? if not the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, that living providence of missions ; that most catholic of all associations, after the Church ; that work so visibly blessed of God. For although counting only about sixty years of existence, it has grown like the grain of mustard seed, and become an enormous tree whose branches spread their foliage far and wide. It extends its beneficent action all over the globe. Like unto the spring of the Earthly Paradise, it has divided into four great rivers, irrigating all the portions of the old and new continents.

To dispel coarse ideas and superstitious practices, to change the morals of corrupt peoples, to raise the moral condition of man, while relieving his material position, such is the good that the Association of the Propagation of the Faith has achieved among all the infidel nations of the earth, by the introduction among them of our holy religion. Such is the good that it has produced in our forests, and which it will produce on a still larger scale, if we will only encourage it within the measure of our strength, and prove ourselves, by our generosity, worthy of its favors.

It is a very remarkable circumstance that this blessed work, while it gives succor to unfortunate peoples, also enriches the individuals who extend it a helping hand ; it sheds streams of grace at once on those whom it protects and those who protect it. All the Sovereign Pontiffs, from the date of its establishment, Pius VII, Pius VIII, Leo XII, Gregory XVI, Pius IX and Leo XIII seem to have taken pleasure in honoring it by multiplied

eulogiums and enriching it with numerous indulgences. It would take too long to enumerate them in this place but you may do so, when explaining this devotion to your parishioners.

And then, when we consider how easy it is to become a member of the Propagation of the Faith, what Christian would refuse to enroll his name? Where is the man so busy that he cannot find time, during the day, to say one *Our Father* and one *Hail Mary*, with this invocation: *St. Francis Xavier, pray for us*. Where is the man so utterly poor, that he cannot set aside one cent a week? Ah! Beloved Colleagues, make the faithful understand well that that alms is the word which will convert poor infidels, the doctrine which will enlighten the blind, the balm which will soften the most barbarous hearts. Without going from home, they will preach with the missionary, baptize with him, visit abandoned Christian stations, bear the last sacraments to the dying and open the gates of heaven. By this means they will secure perpetuity of faith in the bosom of their families. A nation of apostles can never become impious!

In thus inviting you so earnestly, my Dear Colleagues, to establish and spread the work of the Propagation of the Faith, I am only carrying out the intentions of Our Holy Father Leo XIII. In an encyclical letter, dated December 3, 1880, he says to the bishops of the Catholic world:

"You therefore, Venerable Brethren, who are called to share our solicitude, we exhort you to work unanimously toward helping with zeal and ardor the apostolic missions, putting your trust in God and allowing no difficulty to frighten you. The salvation of souls is at stake for whom our Redeemer sacrificed his life

" and has given us, Bishops and Priests, the holy mis-
 " sion of completing his body. Hence by remaining at
 " the post where God has placed each of us, and watching
 " over the flock confided to us, let us strive ardently to
 " carry the succors which have been customary since the
 " beginning of the Church ; viz : the preaching of the
 " Gospel aided by the prayers and alms of the faithful.
 " Let those who pray, invoke the Virgin, Mother of God,
 " who has the power of destroying all the monsters of
 " evil, and her Most Pure Spouse whom several missions
 " have already adopted as guardian and protector, and
 " whom the Apostolic See has lately proclaimed Patron
 " of the universal church ; also the princes and the
 " whole college of apostles from whom emanated the
 " first preaching of the Gospel throughout the universe ;
 " in fine, all persons eminent for sanctity who have con-
 " secrated their strength to this ministry and have shed
 " their blood for it. To these prayers and supplications
 " let there be added almsgiving whose efficacy is such
 " that it will convert those who are the farthest distant
 " or the most occupied with other things, into the coad-
 " jutors of apostolic men and the associates of their
 " labors and their merits. In these times, many are in
 " straitened family circumstances, but let no one be dis-
 " couraged ; the subscription cannot be a burden to
 " any, while a number of small sums put together [pro-
 " duce a considerable revenue."

When you set all these motives before your parishion-
 ers, to induce them to join in this admirable work,
 you will not forget to insist upon a reason that is pecu-
 liar to ourselves. I mean the assistance of the Indian
 tribes living at our doors. They are our poor, the spiri-
 tual paupers whom Providence designs for our charity.

Who will deem himself obliged to extend to them a helping hand, if we, their immediate neighbors, remain insensible to their misfortune? Our contributions will be despatched to the Central Bureau of the Association at Lyons, whence, let us hope that, in view of our immense needs, they may come back to us with large increase. Through the channel of our majestic river, the waters of our lakes flow into the sea; but the generous and fruitful sea returns them in beneficent dews and rains. You will interest the pious persons of your parish in the success and development of this work. You might resort to the means suggested by the Board of Directors: "One subscriber out of ten collects the alms and pays the amount into the hands of another member, who has ten similar collections to receive, that is, one hundred subscriptions." Should any further information be required regarding the organization of the society, we can be written to. On this, as on all other matters connected with our ministry, we are at the disposal of all. To encourage and sustain the zeal of your parishioner, you may, on the 3rd December, of each year, say a mass for the associates both living and dead, and we allow you to take the fee thereof out of the funds of the Association. Every year, during the month of October, you will send us the amount of the alms.

May Heaven bless your efforts, to draw from this good work the most abundant fruits of grace and salvation.

L. POWERS.

We maintain in all their force and obligation the synodal statutes and episcopal ordinances which were in vigor in this part of the diocese of Ottawa, at the

time of its erection into an Apostolic Vicariate. These rules of discipline are the fruits of wisdom and experience, and so long as circumstances remain unchanged, they must remain the same.

You will receive with these presents, on a separate sheet, the renewal of the powers which our inaugural pastoral confirmed to you until the new year.

You will observe that you no longer have, in a general way, the power of saying mass twice a day, nor that of saying mass in a private house. In the event of such powers becoming necessary, you will please address yourselves to us to obtain authority, taking care to state in your letter the motives of your demand. Decrees emanating from the Sacred Roman Congregations, which we have lately seen, make us understand how desirous they are at Rome that we should be reserved on these two points.

V. DISPENSATIONS.

When you send any one to us to solicit a dispensation from the bond of consanguinity, be so kind as to give him a letter in which you will set forth the canonical reasons militating in favor of such a dispensation.

Similarly, in transmitting to us the componenda received by you for dispensation from bans, you will kindly add the names of the parties thus dispensed, that we may keep them in the archives of the Vicariate, for future reference, if need there be.

VI. COLLECTION FOR THE POPE.

The august inmate of the Vatican is our father in Jesus Christ; the Roman Church is our mother. Both

the one and the other, sorely pressed in these days of evil, by the encroachments of the Revolution, are confronted by great needs. Christian children, let us hearken to the wants of our father and not overlook the wailings of our mother. "*Fili, suscipe senectam patris tui et gemitus matris tuæ ne obliviscaris.*" (Eccli. III. 14.)

A diocesan regulation ordains that, on the 29th September, a collection shall be made for the Pope in all the churches. Several perhaps, owing to the changes taking place in September last, may have forgotten to announce this collection. We trust that they will supply the omission on the first suitable Sunday, and that they will send, directly on receiving them, the offerings which the faithful will have placed in their hands.

We shall have little to present to the Holy Father, but we are anxious to give him this tribute of affection. Doubtless he will receive with emotion this mite of our poverty. He will smile at our good intention and he will deign bless it with the most fruitful benedictions.

VII. SIXTH COUNCIL OF QUEBEC.

You are aware that the deliberations of the Bishops of the Province of Quebec, assembled on the 9th May 1878, after being examined and approved by the Holy See, were published at the commencement of the present year. We do not doubt that you have already procured copies of this work, the prescriptions of which are of the highest interest to you and your parishioners, since the Vicariate of Pontiac, like the most of the dioceses from which it is detached, belongs to the ecclesiastical Province of Quebec.

As to the decrees which particularly regard yoursel-

ves, we are certain that you will receive them in a great spirit of faith, being fully persuaded of their importance even to the slightest detail. Every point has been weighed in the scales of the sanctuary. Those rules of discipline are the expression of the will and law of God in your regard. We wish that it may be said of every one of you : *Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius*. (Ps. xxxvi, 31).

In respect to the decrees that concern the faithful in general, make your people understand thoroughly all the respect and obedience which they deserve. They have been proclaimed by those delegates of the Holy Gospel whose mission is to teach the world : *Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes*. (Math. xxviii, 19) ; by those doctors of the new law, grounded in the science of Jesus himself : *quia omnia quaecumque audivi a Patre meo, nota feci vobis*. (Joan. xv, 15) ; by those vicars and representatives deputed by the Saviour to men : *sicut misit me Pater et ego mitto vos*. (Joan. xx, 21) ; by those princes of the Church whom the Holy Ghost has established to lead and direct it : *Sanctus Spiritus posuit episcopos regere ecclesiam Dei* (Act. xv. 28.) ; finally by those successors of the apostles who, under the supreme jurisdiction of the successor of St. Peter, have the right to judge of the orthodoxy of faith and to carry laws into the limits of their respective dioceses. For if Jesus Christ told St. Peter to feed his lambs and his sheep : *Pasce agnos meos ... pasce oves meas* (Joan. xxi, 15-17), Peter in his turn said to the Bishops : *Pascite qui in vobis est gregem Dei*. (1 Pet. v. 2.) Furthermore, their decisions should enjoy all the more authority, that the judges of doctrine assembled in solemn conclave under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to communicate to each other their studies and their lights, to adopt in concert the most proper means and the most efficacious preservatives, in order

to afford a remedy to the evils that afflict or threaten our Christian people. And then these ordinances have been sanctioned by the high approbation of the infallible Pontiff whom Jesus has placed at the head of his Church to confirm his brethren : *Confirma fratres tuos.* (Luke xxii, 32). To make light of these decrees, so worthy of respect in every way, would be despising Jesus Christ himself; *Qui vos audit, me audit; et qui vos spernit me spernit.* (Luke, x, 16). It would be to act as infidels : *Si quis ecclesiam non audierit, sit tibi sicut ethnicus et publicanus.* (Math. xviii, 17) It would be drawing the most terrible anathemas on one's head. *Qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur.* (Math. xvi, 16).

In order that the decrees of the sixth Council of Quebec may become the practical rule of faith, morals and discipline throughout the extent of the Vicariate of Pontiac, you will make it your duty, on as many succeeding Sundays as may be necessary, and in instructions clearly put and well prepared before hand, to explain them one by one, in every detail that may interest the faithful. ~~In~~ Especially do not forget to insist on those decrees that treat of the education of children; of the dangers to be avoided in matters of faith; of fast and abstinence; of sins against charity and justice in lawsuits, and of dangers to morals. That is to say, the decrees XVI, XVII, XIX, XXI, XXII, XXIV.

By these presents, we declare that the decrees of the sixth Provincial Council of Quebec are published in the Vicariate Apostolic of Pontiac and that from this day they become binding.

VIII. OUR WISHES.

The joyous festivals of Christmas and New Year are upon us. In pursuance of an ancient and highly recom-

commendable custom, we offer you our good wishes. Believe us that they are not, as is often the case, the expression of an empty form. In all the sincerity of our soul, and in the love that we bear you in Jesus Christ, we wish you health, happiness and success in your holy enterprises. Above all, we wish you that peace that the Christ of Bethlehem came to bring upon the earth : *et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis*. (Luke, ii, 14) ; that peace so sweet which the world ignores, but which He gives his faithful servants : *Pacem relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis, non quomodo mundus dat, ego do vobis*. (Joan. xiv, 27) ; that repose of conscience which excels in sweetness all the enjoyments of earth : *et pax Dei quæ exuperat omnem sensum*. (Phil. iv, 7) ; that tranquility in the pursuit of good which is a gift of the Holy Spirit and which presupposes a host of virtues in the soul. *Fructus autem spiritus est charitas, gaudium, pax, patientia, benignitas, bonitas, longanimitas, mansuetudo, fides, modestia, continentia, castitas*. (Gal. v, 22-23).

We bless you in all affection, as also the good families entrusted to your care.

On the first Sunday, after receipt thereof, you will read from your pulpit such parts of this Circular as regard the faithful, especially that which has reference to the promulgation of the decrees of the Council.

We remain very sincerely

Belo.ed Colleague;

Your devoted Servant.

+ N. Zephirin. Bishop of Athora
and
Vic. Apost. of Pontiac.

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