

and the great and ardent desires of all our Fathers who are here.

What makes me think that this will not happen is, on the one hand, the excess of my past wickedness, which renders me utterly unworthy of so signal a favor; and, on the other, that I do not believe his Goodness will permit his workmen to be put to death, since through his grace there are still some good souls who eagerly receive the seed of the Gospel, notwithstanding the evil speech and persecutions of all men against us. And yet I fear that divine Justice, seeing the obstinacy of the majority of these Barbarians in their follies, may very justly permit them to come and take away the life of the body from those who with all their hearts desire and procure the life of their souls.

Be this as it may, I will tell you that all our Fathers await the outcome of this affair with great calmness and contentment of mind. And, for myself, I can say to Your Reverence with all sincerity that I have not yet had the least apprehension of death for such a cause. But we are [29] all sorry for this—that these poor Barbarians, through their own malice, are closing the door to the Gospel and to grace. Whatever conclusion they reach, and whatever treatment they give us, we will try, by the grace of Our Lord, to endure it patiently for his service. It is a singular favor that his Goodness extends to us, to make us endure something for his sake. It is now that we consider ourselves truly to belong to his Society. May he be forever blessed for having appointed us to this country, among many others better than we, to aid him in bearing his Cross. In all things, may his holy will be done! If he will that at this hour we should die, oh, fortunate hour for us! If