

DOCUMENT E

PASTORAL FOR THE ERECTION OF THE CATHEDRAL
OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

FRANCIS PATRICK KENRICK

By the Grace of God and of the Holy See, Bishop of Philadelphia.

Venerable brethren of the Clergy, and beloved children of the Laity:

Yielding to the repeated solicitations of many, we have determined to undertake the erection of a Cathedral on the ground lately purchased by us adjoining the Theological Seminary. The vicinity of this institution offers many inducements for the erection of the Church, both to afford to the Professors and Students the opportunity of practising the sacred ceremonies, and to give to the episcopal functions the becoming solemnity. The situation is otherwise highly suitable, being on the front of a large public square, and the ground is sufficiently spacious for the erection of a building which may be the chief Church of the diocese. The costliness of the undertaking, especially as the ground is still unpaid for, made us, for a time, abandon all idea of engaging in it: but the anxiety manifested for several years by yourselves generally to see such a fabric erected, and the assurances of support given to us by several generous individuals, have overcome our own fears, and determined us to lay the foundation of it in a short time, in the confidence that you will not suffer it to be said, that we began to build, and could not bring the work to completion. Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. It is on Him we place our sole reliance; and having nothing in view but the glory of His Name, we commit to His direction the beginning, progress and end of this undertaking. It was a privilege for Solomon to erect the ancient temple wherein the cedars of Libanus, and the most pure gold with costly stones were employed, and a great variety of ornaments in sculpture and carvings were added, that the most precious things of earth might be consecrated to the Creator of all, and the decorations of the dwelling in which He manifested Himself, might impress the beholder with some idea of the glory of that temple in which He dwells enthroned in light inaccessible. We should deem it a great honor and happiness to raise a far less costly edifice, although destined for sublimer purposes — a house deriving its chief splendor from the piety of the worship-

pers, and its chief glory from being the tabernacle of God with men, yet in its size, structure, and decorations shadowing forth something of its mysterious grandeur, which the eye of faith alone can discern. The zeal of individuals has often succeeded in raising churches from their own resources; and in death they have had no reason to regret that they had devoted to this purpose the wealth which others squandered away in indulgence, or left to thankless heirs. But we look for no sacrifice of this magnitude. It seems the order of Divine Providence, in our age, that works of piety and charity should depend on the concurrence of a great multitude of contributors, who, in offering the tokens of their zeal for the advancement of religion, secure to themselves a share in its blessings. In this way even the poor are on an equality with the rich, since merit is estimated not by the amount of the offering, but by the cheerfulness of the giver. It will indeed require a general effort throughout the entire diocess, continued systematically for several years, to accomplish the present undertaking. No selfish consideration should induce any one to withhold his aid; since it is a privilege to have the opportunity of contributing to a work so intimately connected with the Divine glory. Besides, the Cathedral is the common church of the whole diocess, where the faithful, from all parts of it, may repair to the common father for advice, instruction, and consolation. From it are to go forth missionaries trained in the adjoining Seminary, to impart to the most distant portions of the flock the succors of religion. The most authoritative instructions are there to be received from the successor of the apostles, who himself being guided by the doctrines of the universal Church, commits to fit men the charge of teaching others. The sublime worship of the heavenly intelligence and redeemed saints, imaged in the mysterious visions of the Apocalypse, is here to be represented by the Pontiff robed in mystic garments, indicative of the fulness of the priesthood, — by the sacred ministers in the vesture of their respective offices, — by the young ecclesiastics in white robes — all casting themselves before the throne, and before the altar, on which the lamb stands, mystically slain. The censer is to pour out its perfumes, emblems of the prayers of the Saints: sweet canticles of prayer are to fill the choir: and the clean offering which has displaced the Jewish victims, is to be presented by ministering angels to the Lord of hosts, whose name is great among the gentiles from the rising to the setting of the sun. Thither are to be gathered those who have wearied themselves in the search after true religion, and who, disgusted with vacant temples and incoherent effusions, and struck with awe, on entering these hallowed precincts, wherein rites of immemorial antiquity exhibit and

perpetuate the mysteries of faith, will exclaim: "how awful is this place. Truly it is no other than the house of God, and gate of heaven!" We need not multiply words, nor develop reasons, to urge you on to a good work, in which you are eager to embark. To you then, we commend it, with the firm confidence that by your generous co-operation this building will speedily arise, a splendid ornament to the chief city of the State, and a lasting monument of your zeal and generosity. Now to God and our Father be glory world without end. Amen. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Given under our hand at Philadelphia, on the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, in the year of our Lord MDCCCXLVI.

FRANCIS PATRICK,
Bishop of Philadelphia.

By order of the Bishop,
E. J. Sourin, Secretary.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The major amount of material for this biography was found in various archives of which the following are the most important.

Philadelphia Archdiocesan Archives. Naturally these archives, housed in the chancery office of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at 1712 Summer Street, Philadelphia, are the principal archival depot for Kenrick's episcopate. Few ecclesiastical figures have left so much original source material. Exact in administration and given to writing, he kept two diaries. One of these has been carefully translated and edited by the Reverend Francis E. Tourscher, O.S.A., as the *Diary and Visitation Record of the Rt. Rev. Francis Patrick Kenrick, Administrator and Bishop of Philadelphia, 1830-1851*. Although in a few isolated instances Father Tourscher followed the Latin idiom too closely, the translation and editing of the diary is exceptionally well done. After a comparison of the translation with the original it is evident that nothing of any general importance was omitted.

The writer found Kenrick's second diary which has not been translated or published. This untranslated diurnal of 267 pages is the size of a large ledger and embraces the entire period of Kenrick's regime in Philadelphia, ending with his transfer to Baltimore. As Archbishop James Roosevelt Bayley stated in the flyleaf, since it treated only of Kenrick's Philadelphia episcopate he returned the manuscript from Baltimore to Philadelphia. He noted that the first two entries were made by Kenrick's first secretary, Father John Hughes, the future Archbishop of New York. The remainder of the entries were made by Kenrick himself.

Written in four languages, but principally in Latin, this diary is far more than a mere chronicle. It contains personal copies of Kenrick's letters to the prefects of the Propaganda, of his correspondence with other bishops and with the European societies for the Propagation of the Faith. Most of his dealings with trusteeship and steps of a disciplinary or organizing nature, he noted in this untranslated diary. The two diaries, while covering the same years, are not repetitious. Perhaps, the most accurate line of demarcation, although not a perfect one, can be drawn between the two by stating that the translated *Diary* was written by Kenrick