

29<sup>th</sup> December 1813

Mr Van Crombrugghe Senior in Grammont, Escout

My very dear Father and Mother

I am happy to see the New Year arrive because it gives me the opportunity of renewing the sentiments that I hold towards you and the prayers that I offer for your happiness. So it is less to conform to a laudable usage and more to follow the impulse of my heart that I am writing to you. May your years be as numerous before the Lord as are goodnesses that you have shown me! I won't enlarge on this to give you a longer explanation of the prayers that I offer for you; I think I have said enough in this one sentence and I will be content with telling you again that I never let a day go by without commending you to the Lamb without Stain whom I offer to God the Father every day of the year. Today I will only, dear Parents, express to you the sentiments by which I am always penetrated. I would be very happy if the Good Lord were to condescends to hear me.

I learned of the loss that we suffered in our good cousin Vandenhende. I am mistaken, this is not a loss for him or for us; his generous constancy in defending, at the price of his life, the sacred Laws of the Church, has earned for him an ineffable happiness and has procured for us a powerful protector for all the family close to our God. This death, precious before God, should comfort us and make us rejoice and should afflict us: *pro Dei lege certavit usque ad mortem et a verbis impiorum non timuit; fundatus enim erat supra firmam petram.* He fought to the death for God's Law, and, based on firm rock, he did not dread the word of the impious. See the reward that the Lord promised him: *Vos qui reliquistis omnia et secuti estis me, centuplum accipietis and vitam aeternam possidebitis.* You who have abandoned everything and followed me, you will receive a hundredfold and you will possess eternal life.

I dare to hope that the Good Lord, appeased by the prayers and sacrifices of these brave confessors, will be touched, and will give men His ancient mercies; let us join ourselves to them and by dint of good works make violence to the Heavens that we will be able to disarm His just anger and enjoy a double peace in the Church and in the State. May the ending year be the last of the unhappy years and the one that will begin to make us forget all our pains, and make us entirely submissive to the Laws of God and reason! Accept the good wishes that I form for you and please believe me to be sincere.

I have the honour to be with respect

29<sup>th</sup> December 1813

Your very devoted and submissive son

*C Van Crombrugghe*

Please give my compliments of the season to my dear Sisters Rosalie, Charlotte and Cecile, and to François and his Wife. I cannot adequately commend to my sisters and also to my brothers charity towards the poor in these unhappy times; God will have, I believe, consideration and particular care for those who rescue, for love of Him, the suffering poor. It seems to me it is part of the economy of His paternal Providence to give more to those who make better use of goods of the earth; because why do these goods exist? For what end did God create them? So that men could live and glorify Him in using these goods.

