

“a very long space of sea and land and have not seen You at any time, yet having heard
“from very many a number of fine accounts of Your outstanding valour and Your royal
“greatheartedness and Your remarkable bravery and the other guerdons of nature
“heaped on You by God most high, the giver of all good things—to have had word fre-
“quently of these facts about You has made Us feel an affection for You—nay also desire
“Your affection in return, and yet it has been told Us, to Our great pleasure, that You
“being already of uncommon goodwill towards Us seek Our regard and friendship, and
“besides have sent an embassy to Us with many signs of esteem and veneration for Us.
“Still this embassy, if it have been sent, has not yet reached Us.

“But moreover We have heard this of You that You mention the name of Christian
“with respect, and display a ready inclination towards the Christian religion which alone
“teaches and shows the true road to salvation and bliss. For it is said that even persons
“very closely connected with You are Christians, and that in Your royal court are many
“powerful men most dear to You who profess themselves to belong to Christ, and this, at
“Your bidding, they openly demonstrate by the sign of the Cross that gives salvation and
“life, our glory, whereon the Saviour of the world Himself and the author of life, our
“Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Father’s eternal Son clothed in our mortal flesh wondrously
“achieved our salvation in the midst of the earth.

“Now if these tidings be true (as true We hope them to be and We desire it with all
“Our heart) they assuredly fill Our spirit with so great joy that We cannot by any words
“sufficiently express the greatness of that same joy. But We know that with God Almighty
“no word is impossible: He alone is King of kings and through Him all kings reign and
“in His hand are the hearts of kings to turn whithersoever He will. It was He Who in
“very ancient times and centuries indeed far removed from Our memory took the right
“hand of the most valorous Persian king Cyrus and subdued nations before his face and
“overturned kings and humbled the proud and powerful ones of the earth. And Cyrus
“himself, so very famous by God’s aid through many victories, set free the people of God
“captive in Babylon and, moved by His inspiration, decreed that the Lord’s temple which
“had been destroyed by the king of the Chaldaeans be once more built in Jerusalem, and
“the golden and silver vessels of the temple that had been carried away he bade be restored,
“as is handed down by the records of sacred literature.

“Well, O most puissant king of the Persians and successor of Cyrus the great himself,
“We now hear about You that You desire churches of the Christian rite to be built in
“Your kingdom, or perhaps have even begun their building already, so that in them
“God be continually praised and the holy sacrifices offered and the sacred Gospel
“of Christ preached to the salvation of every believer: and on that account they relate
“that You are seeking for Christian priests and presbyters to be sent from the Roman
“Church.

“This, O king, is great news and the start of greater things, and indeed of very great
“ones, as We hope in God’s exceeding mercy by Whose Spirit We doubt not Your heart
“is moved to such excellent thoughts. For, if You truly seek Our friendship—that, namely,
“of the Roman Pontiff and father of Christian kings, if You desire the expounding of the
“faith of Christ in Your provinces, for churches to be built, and to have with You teachers
“and masters of the Gospel, and lastly that Christ’s name and the Christian religion be
“truly propagated in Your very wide territory, be of good cheer for both God himself
“will be Your help and We too by the aid and help of God himself will willingly favour
“these desires of Yours with especial pleasure.

“Rightly do you desire that priests should be sent to You from this holy Roman Church,
“which is the mother and mistress of all the churches which there are in the whole world.
“For just as there is one God and one faith and one baptism, so there is one Roman church,
“the mistress of truth, the foundation of unity and home of the Christian religion, in which
“Peter the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, whom Christ the Lord set as chief shepherd