

“Pope Clement VIII to Our dearest daughter in Christ, the illustrious queen of the
“Persians.

“Dearest daughter of Ours in Christ greeting and the Apostolic blessing. Wondrous
“are God’s decrees and inscrutable the ways of That wisdom which ordains men’s affairs
“powerfully yet agreeably towards His eternal glory—for we do not consider aught to have
“been done without the great oversight of the Divine will—that Your husband, the most
“puissant king of the Persians, born of a Christian mother, has gained in You also, as We
“hear, a Christian spouse. For by God’s helping grace We hope that, even as S. Paul
“wrote that the infidel husband is sanctified by the faithful wife,¹ so too the king himself
“will be brought to the wondrous light of Christian truth and faith. Of this condition of
“affairs there are said to exist manifest truths, for it has been reported to Us about this same
“king, Your husband, that besides his many kingly virtues and fine endowments of mind
“and body he has no small leanings towards our true and holy Christian religion, without
“which no one can be saved, no one gain eternal life and bliss. For he has not only You,
“who profess Christ’s Faith, to share his couch and throne and love ardently, adorned and
“endowed as You are with superior natural gifts, but he has also, they relate, in his royal
“court many men in high position and specially dear to himself, who either already are
“Christians or desire to enrol themselves with Christ. Nay but the king himself is said to
“be so kindly disposed towards Us, whom God’s ordering though beyond Our deserts has
“willed to be the head of the Catholic Church and the father and shepherd of the whole
“Christian people, that (he desires) a real and solid friendship and alliance with Us (and
“seeks) for priests to be sent, who in churches built by the king himself, and dedicated to
“the true God Who made heaven and earth, will announce the tidings of salvation, and
“offer and devote the prayers and sacrifice in the Christian rite.

“So, if the stories that often reach Us are true, as from Our inmost sentiments and heart
“We hope them to be true, assuredly it is some great thing and to be remembered down
“the ages which is being prepared and ordered by God’s mercy, viz. the restoring of the
“Christian religion once more to those widespread realms and territories where in ancient
“times, before the detestable errors of the impious seducer Muhammad, it is known to have
“flourished. For, as naught can be called or thought finer or more divine than this gift of
“God, so also how great the praise, how great the glory, how great the advantages to Your
“husband the king will be brought by it can easily be conjectured and estimated by Your
“own natural perspicacity. Firstly indeed, as You know, without the knowledge of the
“true God and His true Faith all human bliss is naught, as there is no way to eternal life
“open to anyone except by the saving washing of baptism he be reborn in Christ, and
“having entered Christ’s fold, that is the Catholic Church, he be made a living member
“of Christ through the sacrament of regeneration and by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

“But if that same most puissant king, Your husband, with God as the author of it, should
“both gain so great a boon for his own self, and should procure it for his realms and peoples,
“then nothing would have ever existed happier, nothing more illustrious than that: he
“would surpass all previous Persian kings in renown and glory, and like another Cyrus and
“another Constantine the Great he would be celebrated by the tongues of all races and by
“the most brilliant memory and deathless praise of all posterity.

“In addition, bound most firmly by this very strong bond of religion to Us and to Our
“sons, the Christian kings and princes, and as it were made one body, he would be then
“a terror to the most savage Turks, both common enemies of the whole Christian folk and
“his own most implacable foes; and he would not only be the cause of their dismay but
“equipped with his might and the flower of his soldiers, backed up also by Our friendship
“and assistance and that of the Christian princes, he would easily—as it were by casting
“a bridle upon him—pull up that most proud tyrant who desires to devour all kingdoms
“and the empire of the whole of Asia in his insatiable greed to rule: nay more, helped by
“the most high God of armies, he would set free so many people oppressed by the pitiable

¹ I. Corinthians, 7.14.