

FRENCH WALLOON CHURCH CANTERBURY

3rd September 1664

by command of His Gracious Majesty Charles II

Whereas we are certainly informed that for above these 20 yeares last past, there have been great and scandalous divisions amongst those of the Walloone Nation, that live in and about the City of Canterbury, they having separated themselves each from other and made two severall Congregations of their own accord, without any lawfull Authority, and that their animosities did grow to such an hight, that the Peace of the Towne did often runne much hazard thereby, and that it was impossible during all that time for the Ministers of the other Stranger Churches to bring them to any Agreement (a considerable number of them, with one Philippe le Keux their Minister declaring themselves Independents, and breaking Comunion with their Brethren rather then they would obey the Injonctions of their Superiours, whereupon they were by them declared Schismaticks.) And that not withstanding we had since Our Returne, by meanes of the Mayor and Aldermen of the City thereunto appointed, composed all their former differences & reunited them all in one and the same Congregation: yet new divisions being risen amongst them, and we having appointed the Deane and Chapter of Christy-Churche, to heare them (as was by the said le Keux desired) it was reported by the said Deane and Chapter; that their differences (by reason of their great Animosities) seemed to them irreconciliable, and being so found by a great number of themselves, Mr Peeter Jannon one of their Ministers, and with him five hundred Comunicants declared that they did voluntarily and freely submitt to the Government of the Churche of England, and embrace the Liturgie thereof, unto which they forthwith conformed themselves; But the others that followed le Keux formerly in his Independent way, refusing to joyne with their Brethren in their wholesome and Laudable Conformity to the Church Of England, have as We

are informed by the Mayor of Canterbury and other our Officers boldly and unwarrantably presumed without any lawfull Authority, to meete like Fanaticks in a private House, to the disturbance of the publick Peace; Wherefore we require the Mayor of Canterbury and Justices of the Peace within and without the City, and all other our Ministers and Officiers in those parts, to forbid them to meete any more hereafter; And in case they continue therein, to bring them to condigne punishment, according to the Act of Parliament for Uniformity for Gods Worship; They being none of those stranger Churches that are exempted of the Penalties of the said Act, there never having been more than one onely Congregation of Walloones allowed at Canterbury, by our Royal Predecessours, the which have voluntarily and of their owne accord, above twelwe monethes ago, conformed to the Church of England, unto which we require and enjoyne all the said Walloones of what condition and quality soever, to joyne themselves, as the onely meanes of being hereafter in Peace and unity together, and avoiding the scandalous divisions that formerly have been amongst them. And because the number of them who hitherto separated themselves is considerable, we out of our tender care of their edification, doe hereby allow them the Liberty of choosing to themselves, one or more Ministers, as they shall best like to joyne with the other to be Ministers to them all in differently in one and the same Congregation, without any manner of distinction: provided the said Ministers be approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, as Orthodox, conformable and men of good life. And that when they are so united, they contribute each of them, according to his meanes towards the maintenance both of their Ministers, and of those who are poor and distressed amongst them. Which being by them performed accordingly, Our Will and Pleasure is that they be free hereafter of all manner of Taxes for the Poore of the English Nation, as formerly they were before the late troubles, they maintaining their owne poore, as aforesaid out of their owne meanes, without any charge to the Parishes where they live

respectively. Lastly Our further Will and Pleasure is, that first of all, the Plate for the Comunion and Bookes belonging to the said Congregation be forthwith restored for the use of the same, unto the Churche-Wardens by those who are deteyners of the said Plate and Bookes. And in case of denyall That they be prosecuted against, according to the Law, as unjust deteyners of other men's goods, for which this shall be to the said Mayor of Canterbury and Justices of Peace there, and all other Our Ministers, Officers and Loving subjects a sufficient Warrant and discharge. Given under our signe Manuall and Privy Signett at Our Court at Whitehall this 3d of September in the 14th yeare of our Reigne.

By His Majesty's Command

Edw. Nicholas