

**CATHOLIC MEMOIRS OF VERMONT AND NEW
HAMPSHIRE: WITH SKETCHES OF THE LIVES OF
REV. WM. HENRY HOYT AND FANNY ALLEN.
ALSO WITH ACCOUNTS HERETOFORE
UNPUBLISHED OF THE LIVES OF REV. DANIEL
BARBER, REV. HORACE BARBER, S. J., AND
JERUSA BARBER, ECT.**

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L. DE GOESBRIAND

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ST. JOSEPH, OUR PROTECTOR.

THE following pages have been written with a view to promote devotion to St. Joseph, and also with a desire to preserve the memory of graces received through his intercession in the Diocese of Burlington.

St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin, and foster-father of our Lord Jesus Christ, was born at Bethlehem, where pilgrims to the Holy Land are to this day shown the place once occupied by his dwelling. He was issued of the royal house of David, but had not inherited much of this world's goods from his ancestors, and was obliged to earn his bread at the sweat of his brow, by working at his trade, which was that of a carpenter. Though unknown outside of Bethlehem, he enjoyed a distinction much more precious than the favor of men. He was, we may say it, without fear of exaggeration, more beloved of God, than any man then in existence. *He was just*, and Almighty God had adorned his soul with all the graces becoming a man who was to live on earth, so closely united to the Son of God and to his mother. On the day that Mary and Joseph were united in holy marriage, I fancy that angels admired the blessedness of him who was to be the companion and protector of her who was the most exalted of all creatures, and destined to become the queen of men and of all heavenly spirits.

What were the sentiments of those heavenly spirits towards Saint Joseph when they were sent to Bethlehem to adore the Saviour, Christ the Lord? For the infant God was found with Joseph and Mary in the stable, and the multitude of the heavenly host was commanded to sing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

From the blessed moment of our Lord's nativity, Saint Joseph was under the special protection of angels who communicated to him the behests of heaven, concerning the holy family of which he was the head.

Nothing can be more beautiful than the pictures of St. Joseph given us by Catholic artists. Each of those images convey to our souls sentiments of veneration, of love and confidence. Now we see him

holding in his hand the white lily, a fit emblem of the purity of him who was the spouse of the most holy Virgin, and the witness of her virtues; now we see him humbly standing before the manger, whilst the shepherds or the wise men adore the word incarnate and offer Him their presents; here we behold him carrying the Divine Infant in his arms or leading Him by the hand whilst journeying toward Nazareth. An interior view of the shop of St. Joseph represents him at work helped by the God-child, and finally when the time of St. Joseph's demise has come, we see him assisted by Jesus and Mary in his agony. It thus happens that all the memoirs of St. Joseph are full of sweetness to well-instructed Christian. Fathers and mothers love to place their children under his protection. The laboring men who earn their bread at the sweat of their brows, consider him, as it were, one of their own; one who feels for them and will protect them. They who are tried by poverty trust in the prayers of Him who was the purveyor of the Holy Family, and the sick and the dying feel that the foster-father of Jesus and husband of Mary can not fail to obtain for themselves a happy death.

There is another class of persons who love to implore the protection of St. Joseph. We refer here to missionary bishops and priests and to religious communities, who devote themselves to the introduction and preaching of the Gospel in foreign countries. As the great St. Joseph was in the hands of God the instrument which He used to introduce the knowledge of Christ in the world, missionaries are convinced that by praying to St. Joseph their labors will be blessed and that many stray sheep will be brought back into the fold.

DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH IN CANADA.

There are in our days in all parts of the world a great number of religious communities of St. Joseph, of men and women, which have left their country and established themselves in distant lands for the purpose of preaching the Gospel of Christ amongst heretics and infidels.

When Mr. de Champlain, the discoverer of our beautiful lake, was trying to found a Catholic colony in Quebec, at the beginning of the XVII. Century, he had to encounter very great dangers and difficulties. Chief amongst those were the fear of the terrible Iroquois; the small number of the immigrants; the ill disposition of the Huguenots who lived amongst them, and the want of help from the government of the mother country. Fortunately some of the settlers were

fervent Catholics, and about the year 1634 they chose St. Joseph to be the patron and guardian of their country. This election was made by the people and the civil authorities ; it was approved by the clergy and confirmed by the Pope.

The settlers of Quebec were wont to celebrate the feast of St. Joseph with great solemnity ; and besides the solemn services in the church, they had on that day illuminations, processions and fire works. St. Joseph rewarded the piety of the good Catholics of Quebec, and a few years after their choice of him for their protector, he sent to their shores a remarkable woman, *Mary of the Incarnation*, who has been declared *venerable* by the church.

Under the patronage, and as she herself believed under the inspiration and guidance of St. Joseph, she left her convent at Tours, in France, and founded in Canada a house of the Ursulines, for the education of the children and the conversion of the pagan Indians. To the labors of this saintly person and of her associates, Quebec owes to have preserved its faith, and to a great degree also to have been saved from many calamities. The blessings which Mary of the Incarnation procured to Canada were partly communicated to us in the United States, as there are many of our Catholic ladies who were educated by them, and also because many houses of Ursulines have been founded from this first house of the order in Quebec.

Devotion to St. Joseph continues to exist in the Ursuline convent of Mary of the Incarnation, and we here translate what the annalist of their house wrote (1863) concerning the celebration of the 19th of March in their beloved convent. (She wrote especially for the former pupils of the convent.)

“ Come back in spirit, dear reader, within the cloister on the 19th of March. To-day the church and the chapel have put on their choicest ornaments in honor of their holy patron. The greater part of the day is spent at the foot of the altars ; both the religious and their pupils strive to offer to St. Joseph the expression of their gratitude, of their love, of their confidence in his protection. Don't you think that his countenance to-day appears more radiant ? Methinks he loves to have such a load of requests to present to the Divine Infant whom he carries in his arms.

“ When this beautiful day approaches its decline, the religious family meets once more to salute its glorious protector. First of all we visit the places which our patron guarded during the year. In place of the bonfires of old, the images and statues of St. Joseph have been decorated with lights and flowers. Here is St. Joseph of the *treasury*, guarding the treasury, keeping away robbers ; up the great stairs, leading to the granary, we have St. Joseph of the *granary*, who

must provide his children with their daily bread ; in the kitchen we have St. Joseph *at work*, who, for two hundred years past, has blest the humble labours of God's servants.

" We stop a little longer at the door of the Infirmary, and here our hymn to St. Joseph is one of our sweetest ones. St. Joseph watches with great attention at the door of this room ; he will welcome us here with a sweet smile, and promises to console us in sickness, to obtain for us a blessed death.

" Let us go back to the holy place. How charming are the chants of which devotion and fervour constitute the chief harmony ! No doubt that angels carry them at once to St. Joseph, who is a patron and guide as they are." (*Les Ursulines de Quebec*, vol. 1, p. 808.)

Concerning Montreal, the other more ancient and important point of Canada, it is remarkable that the founders of that colony, who were very devout Catholics, undertook its formation with a view to procure thereby the conversion of the Indians and to establish a community of Christians who, by their fervour, would emulate the heroic charity of the early Christians. For this purpose they planned the establishment of three religious congregations or communities, one of which, a community of priests, would employ itself in preaching the Gospel ; the other would devote itself to the education and instruction of the young, and the third to the service of the sick and the dying.

In this manner, they justly thought, they would imitate the holy family of Nazareth. The priests, by their teachings and instructions, would continue on earth the work of Jesus Christ ; the teaching congregation would continue and show forth the virtues of Mary, virgin and mother ; and the third congregation, devoted to the care of the sick, would represent St. Joseph, the guide and protector of the poor family. I need not remark concerning Montreal, that the Sulpicians and the Sisters of the congregation were the two first communities which employed themselves in the care of souls and the instruction of the young. But the mission of St. Joseph on earth was there represented by the founding of the *Hotel-Dieu*, under the charge of the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was well for the young colony of Montreal that these devoted sisters were there in its infancy, when the colonists, so few in number, saw so many of their members wounded or killed by the terrible Iroquois. As early as the year 1606 many of the soldiers who were stationed in the newly erected fort of St. Anne in Isle Lamot owed their escape from certain death to the care they received at the hands of these sisters, to whose hospital they were taken from their distant island. The Sisters of St. Joseph of the *Hotel-Dieu* are true to the spirit of their first mother, and in their immense and admirable new hospital at the foot of the mountain in Montreal, they nearly always

have some patients of Vermont or other New England States. There many are cured, owing, perhaps, more to the prayers and excellent nursing of the sisters than to the skill of their admirable physicians and surgeons. The Sisters of St. Joseph are a cloistered community. In their works of charity they are not encouraged by the hope of being praised by men. The remembrance of St. Joseph ministering to the Son of God, the honor in the sight of God attached to this office, the hope of the greater reward promised to works of mercy, are the chief incentives to their life of devotion.

As St. Joseph was the guide of *Jesus Christ poor, king of the poor and founder of the evangelical poverty*, the Sisters of St. Joseph love to turn their eyes to him in the midst of their labors, and his pictures or statues are to be seen in all their departments or oratories. The picture of St. Joseph which we see more frequently in Montreal is the one which represents him journeying on foot with the Holy Virgin and the child Jesus. We presume that this representation is thus placed under the eyes of the Catholics of Canada, because from the beginning of its colonization the Catholic immigrants, as also the Indian converts, were frequently exhorted to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.



"Mother, behold the man who saved me."

ALTAR TO ST. JOSEPH
IN THE CATHEDRAL OF BURLINGTON.