

Notwithstanding the yells and wild gesticulations of the blood-thirsty Iroquois, the dozen Hurons who had not escaped decided to sell their lives as dearly as possible. They were valiantly resisting when they perceived a new contingent of forty Iroquois hastening across the river to aid their captors. The struggle was now unequal; several Hurons who were still able fled to the woods, leaving the Frenchmen and a few faithful neophytes who heroically stood their ground and refused to abandon the missionary. While the Iroquois were pursuing the fleeing Hurons René Goupil threw himself at the feet of Father Jogues, made his confession, received absolution, and then offered himself in sacrifice to God. His virtue revealed itself at that critical moment of his life. In a sublime act of resignation he turned to his priestly companion and exclaimed, "Father, may God be

**He is cruelly
tortured**

blessed! He has permitted this; may His holy will be done! I accept this cross; I desire it; I embrace it with all my heart!"¹ Meanwhile the Iroquois had returned with the unhappy Hurons. They seized Goupil, tore off his finger nails, crushed his bleeding fingers between their teeth, stripped him of his clothing and showered blow after blow on him with their fists and knotty sticks. Notwithstanding the excruciating pain he was enduring, the young man showed great fortitude and presence of mind. Amid his tortures he called the attention of Father Jogues to an aged Huron whom the Iroquois were about to

1 *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. xxviii, p. 119.