

During the management of Mr. Charon, the Hospital made rapid progress in prosperity and importance; but after his death his successors proved to be ill-qualified to direct the affairs of the establishment; the brotherhood was reduced to two or three in number and the hospital was irretrievably in debt. It finally succumbed and the whole estate was therefore handed over to the Seminary of St. Sulpice.

In 1737, the Rev. Mr. Normant, a Sulpician, acting in his capacity of Vicar-General, of Parish priest and also as the representative of the Seigneurs of the Island, sought out means of resuscitating the defunct establishment by the selection of a person capable of making it once more a home for the needy and infirm. His choice fell on a widow lady, President of the confraternity of the Holy Family, who like another Tabitha had made herself a mother to the poor.

Although awed at the thought of undertaking such a work as that proposed by Mr. Normant, Mde d'Youville, which was the lady's name, accepted in obedience to the voice of her spiritual Director and in union with three pious companions, also devoted to works of charity, rented a small house and entered it on the 30th October 1738 with four or five infirm poor, the first foundations of a new order. All good works generally meet with opposition and the charitable ladies soon felt the effects of popular prejudice and ill-will. The public suspecting the designs of the Seminary in regard of the Charon Institution, were the promoters of the insensate persecution, while Mde d'Youville's relatives added their voices to the popular clamor.

The Rev. Mr. Normant foreseeing coming events, had prepared the little nucleus for the approaching trial and in a few appropriate words armed them for the battle. "The Cross is everything to the Christian. It is his light, his guide, his armor. Like the walls of a fortified city, it must invest him all round, —there must be no breach,—it must be raised on the ramparts