

The sick man had a special devotion for St Joseph. Dear Brother Camille, who was aware of it and who acted as nurse to him, said one day : « Ask St Joseph to cure you. » But he merely replied : « Let St Joseph do what he wishes ; he knows very well what he is doing. » This answer so full of faith and confidence also obtained its reward. It was on the eve of the feast of that glorious Patriarch, that he rendered his noble soul unto God, as if St Joseph, the patron of happy deaths, has wished thereby to show that he had taken him under his special patronage.

Meanwhile the supreme moment drew near, — Father Gravel received the last Sacraments with touching piety.

Before dying, he said to Rev. Father Tielen, the Superior of the Convent. « Reverend Father, I am going to die ; I offer my life as a sacrifice for the parish and especially for the success of the retreat. » He referred to the retreat which was then being preached to the men of the Holy Family of the Parish. That very evening, this generous offer was communicated to those who were making the retreat. All were deeply touched by it and prayed for the dying man whom all loved. Finally a crisis came, which lasted but a short time, and carried away from earth that noble soul of which the world was unworthy. This was on the 18th March 1885, Rev. Father Gravel was in the 33rd year of his age and in the third of his religious profession.

He was the first child of St Anne de Beaupré, the first Canadian in fact who offered himself to God in the Institute of St Alphonsus. He was also, in Canada, the first flower culled in that garden so dear to Jesus Christ. We were, therefore, quite right in calling him as we did, at the beginning, by the glorious title of « Victim. »

His funeral took place on the 21st March, amid a great concourse of people, of priests and of religious. The crowd followed the deceased to a new vault constructed expressly for the Fathers under the basilica.

Rev. Father Gravel lies there quite near St Ann, his beloved Patroness who had so visibly blessed his birth, his life and his death.

P. WITTEBOLLE C. SS. R.