

Pioneers of the Faith

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ONTREAL, as has been repeatedly shown, has had an altogether providential origin, free from the taint of commercialism, of greed for gold and those baser passions, which mar the early annals of so many an infant state. It enjoyed moreover a singular protection, for though it lay in the direct war path of the Iroquois, who were numerically so strong, and who had conquered even the once powerful Hurons and other native tribes, the handful of early colonists were enabled to hold their ground, and were never once obliged to yield to the ferocious enemy.

Amongst its pioneers and founders, are some, who deserve to rank with those christians of the apostolic times, and their names may be written on the bead-roll of those whom the common voice at least, numbers with the elect. In the first place, was that company of the Associates of Montreal, Olier and La Dauversiers, Fancamp and those others, whose names by their own desire, were concealed from their contemporaries, and whose only aim in the work of colonization and in the alms which they gave, was the glory of God, the foundation of a new Catholic metropolis in those remote regions, and the consequent evangelization of the savages. Other holy personages were associated therewith by their prayers, at least; such as the celebrated Marie Rousseau, a woman of lowly origin but exalted holiness, Brother Claude Legai, and de Condren the Confessor of Olier, who encouraged him so much in his labors for Montreal. But all these and many others, who had its interests at heart, never saw that promised land. Of those, who did