

On the picturesque hill of the village of St Anne de Beau-pré, a few hundred yards from the Shrine, stands a cheerful and modest looking dwelling where the eye can contemplate the imposing Basilica dedicated to the miracle-worker of Canada. At sight of that majestic temple, the spectator cannot refrain from a feeling of admiration. His gaze rests on the gigantic statue of the Saint, standing between the two church-towers, as if watching over the whole country. With what delight he hears the four bells of the shrine ring out their chimes. What an impression is produced on him when the greatest of all, the *Pilgrim's Bell*, send its solemn notes floating in the air !

On that hill, in that house, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1851, was born François-Xavier Gravel, a son of one of the oldest families of the place. He was baptized on the same day by Rev. M. P. Garipey, then pastor of the parish.

The childhood of François was marked with the sign of the Cross. Like all noble souls, he had to drink of the chalice of the Savior's Passion. Up to the age of seven, he was afflicted with a disease that is somewhat common in children and he endured it like a little martyr. When his pious parents found that no medicine could cure him, they made a vow to the Blessed Virgin that, if the child were cured, he would wear blue clothes for two years. The Queen of Heaven came to the assistance of the little patient and, marvelous to relate, the disease disappeared, never to return.

Mary did not stop there in her favors to her protégé. She led him to her own Mother St Ann. She made him love her. O ! how he cherished her shrine ! As a chorister and an active and interested witness of the pilgrimages, how delighted he was to be in his mother's house ! And how she, in her turn, generously rewarded that precocious and ardent devotion ! Was it not at the feet of St Ann that the child received the graces of selection that were to influence his whole life ? Did he not owe to her, among other things, that docility that he ever displayed towards his virtuous parents and, later on, the courage that he needed to follow his vocation ?

In fact, the youth of François, passed in piety and made