

SALLE GAGNON

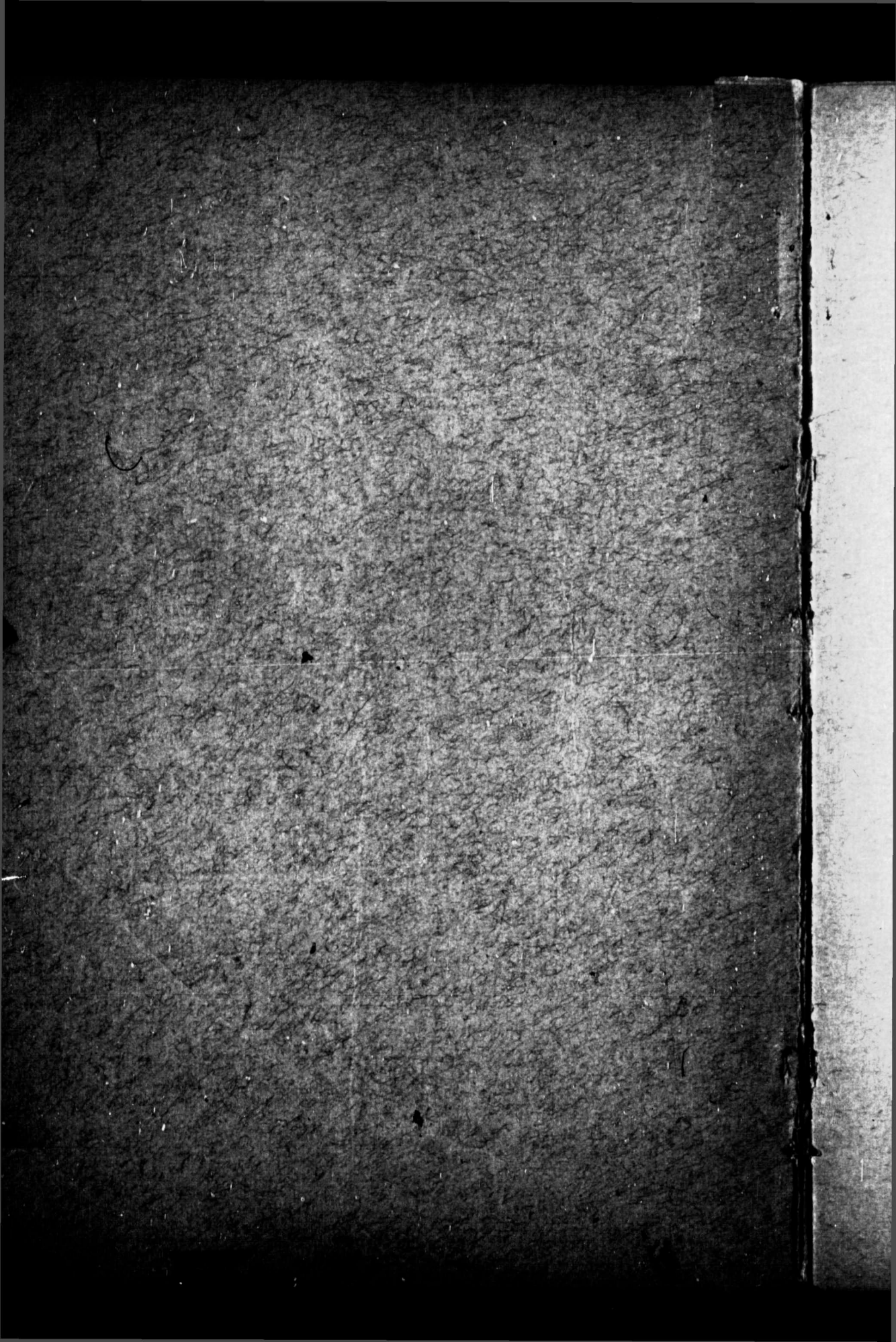
Chapel of Our Lady

OF THE

SACRED HEART



NOTRE-DAME



CHAPEL of OUR LADY of the SACRED HEART

INTRODUCTION

THIS chapel, situated at the apsis of the parochial church of Notre-Dame, is one of the most beautiful monuments in the city of Montreal : architecture, sculpture, paintings, decorations, there is nothing in it that is not worthy of remark and should not be studied in the minutest details.

When he crosses the entrance of the principal door, the visitor experiences a sense of amazement and admiration owing to the harmony of the lines, the splendour of the ornamentation, and the ampleness of the proportions.

The chapel is in the form of a latin cross, with 90 feet in length, 85 feet in the transept, and an altitude of 55 feet.

One is never tired of admiring the numerous statues distributed with perfect symmetry in the whole chapel and especially in the Sanctuary, the elegant galleries, the pannels adorned with mosaic, and chiefly the paintings, all of them executed by Canadian artists who have been in Paris, pupils of the most renowned masters.

It is especially for the explanation of those paintings that the following notes have been written,

I. The Dispute of the Blessed Sacrament.

COPY OF

RAPHAEL'S FRESCOS

Placed on the wall above the main entrance of the chapel of our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Notre-Dame Church. (22x18 feet.)

This painting, commonly known as *The Dispute of the Blessed Sacrament*, represents the grandest scene that can be conceived by the imagination or brought under our view.

The action takes place simultaneously in heaven and upon the earth; nevertheless it is one. It figures Jesus-Christ triumphing in heaven and, on earth, hidden in the Eucharist; but on earth as in heaven, everything is centered in Christ and shows clearly that he truly is the Alpha and the Omega of all things.

Rio, in his work on *Christian Art*, says that this composition is without a rival in the whole history of Painting: "In whatever age or school where one would like to find a point of comparison to furnish an idea of this truly wonderful work, it would be difficult to meet in the whole domain of ideal and mystical art anything to surpass it. Any spectator, previously initiated into the mysteries and essentials of the religious ideal, will give a preference to this fresco, not only over the others of Raphael, but even over his most deservedly admired paintings, the famous Transfiguration itself included."

After this general glance, a few special explanations will throw more light on this remarkable work.

At the top of the scene above appears the Eternal Father. Full of majesty and grandeur, with his right hand he blesses and with his left holds up the world. Multitudes of angels radiate around him, and cherubs, who seem to be moving within that brilliant sphere, form his court. But if the Eternal created all things for his

glory, this glory is his Word, his much beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased, by whom and for whom all things have been made. This is what Raphael meant to signify by placing the Son of God in the very center of heaven, on a throne beaming with glory, with his hands turned towards the world as if to show his glorious wounds whence flows the blood which has saved mankind

On the right of the triumphing Son, Mary, his divine Mother, sits. Her posture is one of reserve and supplication. With her hands clasped on her breast, her head bent towards her Son, she seems to say to him : "Of the fulness we all have received."

On the left is John the Baptist. He looks down towards the crowd and with his finger points out the Lamb of God, as if saying : "Behold Him who taken away the sin of the world." A little beneath Mary and the Baptist, Raphael has grouped, on clouds transparent with glory, some of the apostles, patriarchs, prophets and martyrs, in a word, the best representatives both of the old and the new Covenant.

In the first row, like immovable columns, sit the two great apostles, Peter, on the right, holding the keys, the badge of his power, and, on the left, Paul leaning on his sword. Close to saint Peter the head of the christian family, but in the second row, we see Adam, the head of the human family, in conversation with the prince of the Apostles. In succession to Adam follow saint John and the prophet David, who is in the act of reading in the book of saint John what he sang of, that is, the prophetic history whose eye witness was John, the well beloved disciple. Next comes saint Stephen, the first martyr, with another saint, half hidden in the clouds.

Opposite, at the nearest point to saint Paul, is the patriarch Abraham. He holds in his hands the knife, of the sacrifice and looks at the altar whereupon the true Isaac is immolated. A little in back is saint James, who represents Hope, as Peter Faith and John Charity. All three were the eye-witnesses of the transfiguration. Near

saint James appears Moses, pointing out the tables of the Law. Next come saint Lawrence and saint George.

In a straight line, just under Jesus-Christ, rules, in a blaze of glory, God the Holy Ghost who proceeds both from the Father and the Son. He appears surrounded by four angels holding the Holy Gospels of which he is the Inspirer. Here the heavenly scene closes.

Now, upon earth, in the middle of the bright azure of the heavens, Raphael brings out into prominence the ostensorium, which, set on the altar of the New Covenant, joints earth to heaven and forms the center, as it were, of the whole painting.

On each side, nearest to the altar, are the four great Doctors of the Latin Church. On the left of the beholder, saint Jerome, always steeped in study, holds upon his knees, with athletic vigor, an open in-folio; but saint Bernard, vested with the cope, shows to him, with both hands, the remonstrance and seems to say. "Suspend for a moment your studies and gaze on this; all is there." By the side of saint Jerome is saint Gregory, his eyes turned towards the august Sacrament. On the right the eye of the spectator meets saint Ambrose sunk in deep contemplation; his eyes and hands are lifted up towards heaven. Saint Augustine, whom he converted, is close to him and dictates his thoughts to a young man at his feet.

To these four Doctors, Raphael has added the principal illustrations of the Church. The first on the right of the spectator is Peter Lombardus, called the Master of Sentences; with a gesture full of authority, he shows to the entire assembly how the mystery of Eucharist unites the militant with the triumphant Church. Duns Scotus, the "Doctor Subtilis" is placed a little in the back ground, as if the artist seemed to convey the idea that his doctrine is not very sure on all points. But one can see and distinguish clearly pope Anacletus, who holds the martyr's palm, and pope Innocent III, whose look and attitude nobly proclaim the truth of the mystery. Behind pope Anacletus, we see saint Thomas Aquinas, the author of the hymns in honor of the Blessed Sacrament, and saint

Bonaventure, with the cardinal's hat, reading the treatise he has composed on the sacrifice and the holy mysteries. Following these illustrious men, Raphael gives us a glimpse of the beautiful laurel crowned head of Dante. Not far from Dante is Savonarola, the fiery tribune. The one is the personification of Poetry, the other, of Eloquence. Last of all, Architecture, that raises temples to the God of the Eucharist, is portrayed in the feature of Bramante; and Painting, which well deserves likewise to figure in this concert of praise, is represented by Perugino, the master of Raphael.

If we pass now from the right to the left group, we shall admire how the artist has gone through all the ranks of Catholic society. Here the personages have no names, but their character and attitude are emblematic of the varieties of the Church.

Our attention is first drawn to two bishops, one of whom full of recollected gravity, the other of a tender and winning piety. Near these a man, who represents Science, lays his books at the foot of the altar. On the last plane, the kneeling crowd who believes, prays and adores.

In fine, there are, at the two groups of this great scene of adoration and love, two groups well deserving of the closest attention, so typical are they of varied opinions of men regarding the Sacrament of the altar and religion in general. On the spectator's right, a young man, in all the fire and strength of age, leaning over a balustrade and stopping forward with restless curiosity towards that imposing assembly of doctors and saints, seems to inquire whether he must believe the mystery, notwithstanding the conflicting testimony of his senses, mingle with the multitude who adore it. A manly personage, richly clothed, shows Innocent III to him and seems to say: "Listen to the Popes and Doctors, be wise and you will believe." The scene on the other side is quite different. It represents an aged man, holding in his hands the holy Scriptures, and seeming to find some occasion to disagree with the sacred texts relating to Eucharist. Five or six heads, grouped around his, express

either curiosity, or attention, or a kind of surprise. But whilst the eyes of the hearers are fixed upon the gospel page the meaning of which the old man, with the indocility natural to human pride, endeavours to distort, a young man with charming face, leaves the group, walks to the altar, and, looking back towards the old man seems to say to him, with a gesture, modest, but firm and inviting : "Come and adore with us, and taste how sweet the Lord is in the Sacrament of Eucharist."

Such, in short, is Raphael's great fresco, reproduced in the new Chapel of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. This copy is the work of M. Ludger Larose, who went to Rome in December, 1890, and put himself under the guidance of the Director of the French Academy of the Fine Arts, Mr. E. Hébert, of european celebrity. The copy of Mr. Larose got the approbation of Mr Hébert and of another distinguished artist, Mr. V. Palmaroti, president of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Spain.

Here are the two letters :

After several careful visits to M. L. Larose's work, *The Dispute of the Sacrament*, I certify the copy to be good and conscientiously made.

ERNEST HEBERT,
Director of the Academy of France.

Rome, June 23rd, 1891.

I the undersigned, certify having seen the copy of Raphael's *Dispute of the Sacrament* executed by Mr. Ludger Larose, and having compared it with the original, can guarantee that it is executed, with great care and talent and gives most satisfactory result.

V. PALMAROTI,
Director of the Royal Academy of Spain.

Rome, June 22nd, 1891.

II. The lost Paradise

(15½ x 8½.)

... And the Lord God said to the serpent : "Because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed among all cattle, and beasts of the earth ; upon thy breast shalt thou go, and earth shall thou eat all the days of thy life.

I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and

thy seed and her seed ; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel . . .

And the Lord God sent Adam out of the paradise of pleasure, to till the earth from which he was taken.

And he cast out Adam : and place before the paradise of pleasure Cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

III. The Sibyl of Tibur.

According to the first christian traditions, a few years before the Nativity of our Lord Jesus, the tiburtina Sibyl foretold to the roman emperor Augustus the wonderful birth of the divine Redeemer of the World.

The painter has chosen the very moment, when the emperor goes down the staircase of his palace, followed by many consuls, dressed with the white *toga* and preceded according to the custom of the time by two roman *lictors*.

The sibyl detains the emperor to show him the miraculous Virgin and Mother with her glorious Child, just emerging amongst the clouds.

L. LAROSE.

IV. The Annunciation.

“ And in the sixth month, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth.

“ To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David : and the name of the virgin was Mary.

“ And the Angel, being come in, said to her : Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : Blessed art thou among women.

“ And when she had heard, she was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.

“And the Angel said to her : Fear not, Mary : for thou hast found grace with God :

“Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son ; and thou shalt call his name Jesus.

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High ; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father : and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.

“And of his kingdom there shall be no end.

“And Mary said to the Angel : How shall this be done, because I know not man ?

“And the Angel, answering, said to her : The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee ; and the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.

“And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age : and this is the sixth month with her that is barren :

“Because no word shall be impossible with God.

“And Mary said : Behold the handmaid of the Lord : be it done to me according to thy word. And the Angel departed from her.

L. LAROSE.

V. The Visitation.

(13½ x 8½.)

“And Mary, rising up in those days, went into the mountainous country with haste, into a city of Juda.

“And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elisabeth.

“And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb : and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost :

“And she cried out with a loud voice, and said :
Blessed art thou among women ; and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb.

“And whence is this to me, that the mother of my
Lord should come to me.

“For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation
sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.

“And blessed art thou that hast believed ; because
those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to
thee by the Lord.

“And Mary said : My soul doth magnify the Lord :

“And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour :

“Because he hath regarded the humility of his hand-
maid : for, behold, from henceforth all generation shall
call me blessed.

“For he that is mighty hath done great things to me :
and holy is his name ;

“And his mercy is from generation to generations,
to them that fear him :

“He hath showed might in his arm : he hath scatt-
ered the proud in the conceit of their heart :

“He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and
hath exalted the humble :

“He hath filled the hungry with good things ; and
the rich he hath sent away empty :

“He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful
of his mercy :

“As he spoke to his fathers, to Abraham and to his
seed for ever.”

“And Mary abode with her about three months : and
she returned to her own house.

C. GILL.

VI. The Adoration of the Magi.

(23 x 8½.)

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethleem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

“Saying : Where is he that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen his star in the east, and we have come to adore him.

“And Herod the king hearing *this*, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

“And assembling together all the chief priests, and the Scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born.

“But they said to him : In Bethleem of Juda ; for so it is written by the prophet.

“And thou, Bethleem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda : for out of thee shall come forth the ruler, who shall rule my people Israel.

“Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of the star’s appearing to them :

“And sending them into Bethleem, said : Go, and search diligently after the child : and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him.

“And when they had heard the king, they went their way : and behold, the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was.

“And, seing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

“And going into the house, they found the child with

Mary his mother : and falling down, they adored him : and opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh.

“And having received an answer in sleep, that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their own country. J. ST. CHARLES.

VII. The “Woman and her child” of the Apocalypse.

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven : a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars :

“And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered.

“And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and, behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.

“And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them in the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman, who was ready to be delivered ; that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son.

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod : and her son was taken up to God, and to his throne :

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, that there they should feed her a thousand two hundred and sixty days.

“And there was a great battle in heaven : Michael and his Angels fought with the dragon ; and the dragon fought, and his angels :

“And they prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

“ And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent, who is called the Devil, and Satan, who seduced the whole world : and he was cast forth unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

J. C. FRANCHÈRE.

VIII. The Transfiguration.

(19 x 12 feet.)

“ And it came to pass, about eight days after these words, that he took Peter, and James, and John, and went up into a mountain, to pray.

“ And whilst he prayed, the appearance of his countenance was altered : and his raiment became white and shining.

“ And, behold, two men were talking with him. And they were Moses and Elias.

“ Appearing in majesty : and they spoke of his decease, which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem.

“ But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep. And walking, they saw his majesty, and the two men that stood with him.

“ And it came to pass, that as they were departing from him, Peter said to Jesus : Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias : not knowing what he said.

“ And as he spoke these things, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them : and they were afraid, when they entered into the cloud.

“ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying : This is my beloved Son, listen to him.

“ And whilst the voice was uttered, Jesus was found

alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any things which they had seen.

J. C. FRANCHÈRE.

IX. The Rock of Horeb.

“Then all multitude of the children of Israel encamped in Raphidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

“And they chide with Moses, and said : Give us water, that we may drink. And Moses answered them : Why chide you with me? Wherefore do you tempt the Lord?

“So the people were thirsty, therefore want of water.

“And Moses cried to the Lord, saying : What shall I do to this people? Yet a little more and they will stone me.

“And the Lord said to Moses : Go before the people and take with thee of the ancients of Israel, and take in the hand the rod wherewith thou didst strike the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee, upon the rock Horeb : and thou shalt strike the rock, and water shall come out of that the people may drink. Moses did so before the ancients of Israel. And he called the name of that place Temptation.

L. LAROSE.

X. The Wedding of Cana.

“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee : and the mother of Jesus was there.

“And Jesus also was invited, and his disciples, to the marriage.

“And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to him : They have no wine.

“And Jesus saith to her : Woman, what is *that* to me. and to thee? my hour is not yet come.

“ His mother saith to the waiters : Whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye.

“ Now there were set there six water pots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures a piece.

“ Jesus saith to them : Fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

“ And Jesus saith to them : Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it.

“ And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters knew who had drawn the water ; the chief steward called the bridegroom.

“ And said to him : Every man at first setteth forth good wine ; and when men have well drank, then that which is worse : but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

“ This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee : and he manifested his glory ; and his disciples believed in him.

H. BEAU.

XI. The Multiplication of the Loaves.

“ After this Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias :

“ And a great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were infirm.

“ And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

“ Now the pass, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand.

“ When Jesus, therefore, had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip : Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat ?

“ And this he said to try him : for himself knew what he would do.

“ Philip answered him : Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little.

“ One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him :

“ There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes ; but what are these among so many ?

“ Then Jesus said : Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

“ And Jesus took the loaves : and when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down ; in like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would.

“ And when they were filled, he said to his disciples : Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost.

“ So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.

“ Then those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said : This is the prophet indeed, that is to come into the world. J. C. FRANCHERE.

XII. The First Mass in Montreal.

It was at the Pointe à Callières, where the Custom house is situated to-day, that the jesuit Father Vimont offered for the first time the holy Sacrifice, on May 17th 1642.

We may see around the altar Mrs. de la Pelleterie, Miss Mance, de Maisonneuve, de Montmagny, major Closse, some colonists and servants.

During this first mass, F. Vimont foretold the future grandeur of "the small mustard-seed..."

The actual metropolis has fully verified this presage.

This same scene is also reproduced on a bass-relief of Maisonneuve's monument on the Place d'Armes.

J. ST. CHARLES.

XIII. Dollard and his sixteen Companions.

This large painting recalls to mind Dollard and his companions, who, after having received holy communion, pledged to devote themselves for the salvation of the colony.

Every one knows the wonderful struggle between Dollard with his sixteen noble friends and eight hundred Iroquois, at the Long Sault, on the Ottawa river, May 21st 1660.

For fourteen days, intrenched in a small ruined fort, they fought in order to preserve their country.

Every one of them fell in this heroic combat.

The same scene is also reproduced on a bass-relief of Maisonneuve's monument, on the Place d'Armes.

J. ST. CHARLES.

XIV. Christus Consolator.

Come to me all you that labour, and are heavy burthened, and I will refresh you, said the Lord. MATH XI. —The bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. John VI. — Take and eat, this is my body, which shall be delivered for you ; do this in remembrance of me. I. CORINT. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. JOHN. VI.— The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life. JOHN. VI.

J. C. FRANCHERE.

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