

BIOGRAPHY

Bishop Joseph LaRocque



Joseph LaRocque was born in Chambly, Quebec August 28, 1808 and ordained to the priesthood March 15, 1835. He was a professor and director and in 1842 he became the first Superior of the Seminary of Saint-Hyacinthe. In 1847 he was called to the

Bishop's palace at Montreal where he was appointed canon and then in 1852 coadjutor of Montreal when Bishop Prince was named the First Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Saint-Hyacinthe. In 1860 when Bishop Prince died, Joseph LaRocque became the second Bishop of Saint-Hyacinthe.

As Bishop LaRocque knew Father Raymond and Catherine Aurelie very well and had been very encouraging of them up to this time, as well as having a strong personal devotion to the Precious Blood, it was assumed that the foundation of the new Community would go ahead quickly. Unfortunately as a new Bishop, he was in no hurry to found a new community especially as there were some in the Diocese

who opposed the founding of this new Community. After much insistence on the part of Father Raymond and Catherine Aurelie, he decided to ask for a sign from heaven. He asked St. Joseph "to obtain for himself, as a clue to the will of God, a feeling of holy joy and intense trust" (*Love for Love*, p. 71). On the Feast of St. Joseph, April 1861, he received the requested favour to such an extent that he made a firm decision to found the Community.

September 14, 1861, Bishop Joseph LaRocque presided over the official inauguration of the monastery and the community. His words to Catherine-Aurélie and her 3 companions at this time were: "You will exercise a totally interior ministry, the ministry of love...You will exercise an apostolate, that of prayer and sacrifice...Hidden from the eyes of the world, you will bring down upon it the merits of the Blood of Jesus Christ to purify and sanctify it." By loving, praying and suffering, you will fulfill a beautiful, useful and truly sublime function...Courage!" (*Love for Love*, p. 79)

Bishop LaRocque continued to be involved with all stages of the growth of the Community during his time as Bishop from which he retired in 1866. He retired to the Monastery of the Precious Blood where he continued to journey with the Sisters until his death, November 18, 1887.