

hesitate to open her mind to the missionary in the presence of two or three women, who were in company with her, on her design of embracing Christianity. She added that she would have great obstacles to overcome, but that nothing appalled her. The energy with which she spoke, the courage she displayed, a certain modest yet resolute air, that lighted up her countenance, at once told the missionary that his new proselyte would not be an ordinary Christian. He accordingly carefully taught her many things, which he did not explain to all preparing for baptism. God doubtless infuses into hearts, of which he has especially reserved possession, a sort of purely spiritual sympathy, forming even in this life the sacred bond which will unite them hereafter in the abode of glory. Father de Lamberville, whom I knew well, was one of the most holy missionaries of New France, where he died, at Sault Saint Louis, spent with toil and austerity, and, if I may use the expression, in the arms of Charity. He often declared that in his first interview with Tegahkouita, he thought he could discern that God had great designs as to that virgin; yet he would not exercise any haste in conferring baptism on her, and he adopted in her case all the precautions that experience has counselled as necessary, to make sure of the Indians, before administering the sacrament of regeneration.

The whole winter was spent in these trials, and on her side the young catechumen employed this precious time in rendering herself worthy of a grace, whose importance she fully comprehended. Before granting it to adults, the missionaries take great pains to inquire privately into their conduct and morality. Father de Lamberville asked all who knew Tegahkouita, and was greatly surprised to find that there was not one, even among those who had given her most to suffer, but sounded her praises. This was all the more glorious for her, as Indians are much given to slander, and naturally inclined to put an evil interpretation on the most innocent actions. The missionary accordingly no longer hesitated to grant her what she solicited with such earnestness. She was baptized on Easter Sunday, 1676, and received the name of Catharine.

The grace of the sacrament received into a heart which her uprightness and innocence had so well prepared, produced wondrous effects. Whatever idea the missionary had already conceived of the young Iroquois maiden, he was astonished to find in her, immediately after baptism, not a neophyte needing to be confirmed in the faith, but a soul filled with the most precious gifts of heaven, and whom he too would have to guide in the most sublime spiritual ways. In the outset her virtue excited the admiration of those even who were least inclined to imitate her, and those