

to the cultivation of the people of their quarter, with whom, as we have said, each one is charged. But they did not perceive that, while they observe the mandate of charity, the mercy of God overlooks the order of their thoughts and industry, and itself advances their task which they considered so greatly retarded.

Two months or thereabout, then, after the arrival of these poor strangers, the number of their sick beginning to diminish, our laborers had more time and leisure to visit the fields that they had sown in the past. And lo! they immediately perceived, contrary to all their expectations, the greater part of it all ready for harvest, finding the minds of many of those whom they had cultivated in the past fully satisfied with and convinced of the truths of the Faith, and desiring nothing else than to be baptized as soon as possible.

[42] Their fervor went so far that we found ourselves obliged to deliberate whether we should put them off until the times that the Church seems to appoint for the Baptism of Catechumens, namely, Easter and Pentecost; but both were too far away. Upon careful consideration, it was decided to open the door, in this beginning, to all those who should present themselves, according as they were found to be qualified therefor; since it was a question of a new Church, which it was necessary to think of bringing into existence before applying ourselves to give it perfection. But nevertheless it was necessary to proceed with much reserve in this matter, and always to remember that we had to do with Savages, for whose dissimulation and fickleness there would seem to be no comparison.