

*Nam ut grandiores et parentes celesti beatitudine excidunt, eorum quidem isti liberi ac pueri fruuntur qui prius hujus lucis usuram quam baptismalem innocentiam amittent.*

That is what this great servant of God says of those on the coast of la Pécherie [land of sin?]. Although there are already many baptized adults in this nascent mission, the inconstancy of all these savages and the corruption among all these southern tribes are so great that there is more to fear for the Illinois than St. Francis Xavier had to dread in the case of the Indians of the East,—*paucos ad Cælum pervenire nisi eos qui quatuordecim annis minores cum baptismali innocentia excedunt.* Moreover, although I do not confer all the rites of the baptism of adults on girls under 19 years of age, I will not baptize one above 6 or 7 who knows not the prayers, and who is not as well instructed as the adults, and whom I do not cause to make all the necessary acts before administering baptism. There has not been one with a little knowledge who did not know that God forbids those who marry to espouse a man who already has a wife; and the last girl, about 19 years of age, whom I baptized previous to their departure for winter quarters, received baptism only after her father, who is the new chief of the *Peouareoua*, had assured me that he would not marry her to any man who already had a wife.

Although there is a great deal of corruption among these tribes, after all, the number of nubile girls and of newly-married women who retain their innocence is much greater than those in the . . . and the fervor of her who is married to *Sieur Ako* has nothing of the savage in it, so thoroughly is she imbued with the spirit of God. She tells me