

Marguerite finds a “revolutionary” community.

➤ Read the following passage on the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Montréal* in the 17th century, then try to complete the *Word Search* (the ten words are in the passage)!

While still in France, Marguerite Bourgeoys dreams of a new kind of religious life for women, one inspired by the “journeying” life of the Blessed Virgin. She desires that the Sisters follow in the footsteps of Mary, and travel freely where there is need and where charity beckons. This way of life goes against the rules of the time: religious women lived in cloisters. But Marguerite, with her companions, wants, to humbly be a part of people’s lives, to serve them and offer them hospitality whenever necessary.



In France, Marguerite Bourgeoys is a secular teacher of the extern congregation of the *Congrégation Notre-Dame de Troyes*.

Illustration: Francis Back

In Ville-Marie, her dream finally comes true. In 1659, Marguerite establishes the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Montréal*. However, her community will not be officially recognized by the Church authorities until 1698, two years before her death.

After the opening of the stable-school, Marguerite returns to France to recruit new companions who will share her vision. There are more and more children in the colony and she needs help in her teaching ministry. Later French Canadian, Amerindian and English speaking North American women will join the community. Twice more Marguerite travels to France to handle matters of the Congregation. She also travels several times to Quebec City.

New France grows very quickly and measures to populate the colony are undertaken during the reign of King Louis XIV. Despite important material difficulties, Marguerite and her companions set up temporary missions (beginning of the 1660's) and establish permanent ones (during the 1670's) outside Ville-Marie and as far away as Nova Scotia. A "journeying" life is by no means easy! The Sisters travel on foot or by canoe. In addition to being exposed to the elements and to dangers of all sorts, they must also cope with hunger, loneliness and a total lack of privacy.

Word Search

