

Marguerite's Odyssey

The journeying life of Marguerite Bourgeoys
and the Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Montréal.

*Hello,
I am Marguerite Bourgeoys.*



Welcome to this section on the “odyssey” of my life and of the community I founded. It was not always easy for a young woman from France like me to overcome many different obstacles in order to settle in New France and live out her dreams. It was quite an adventure!

But thanks to my unshakeable faith and the courage and determination of my “sisters”, I never gave up. I was also sustained by my motivation to create, with the help of others, a new society. I have always been convinced that by providing practical instruction, we can help those in need to become more self-reliant and to better their lives. That is why I founded a community of non-cloistered sisters.

The Virgin Mary was my inspiration. Following her example, my companions and I travelled wherever we were needed. The sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame who have come after me have continued my mission and are now present on four continents. What a wonderful outcome!

*Come follow our odyssey and complete the
7 challenges... that the Marguerite-Bourgeoys Museum
in Montreal has prepared for you.*

Marguerite finds her vocation and joins in the dream of Ville-Marie.

Marguerite Bourgeoys's adventure in Canada begins in France, her native land. Her destiny becomes clear to her through the people she meets whose ideas inspire her. Historical events also play an important part in the direction her new life will take.

☞ *Read the four statements below and answer the question for each one. You are given a choice of three answers... will you pick the correct one?*

A- In 1640, Marguerite is 20 years old. One day, she “feels the touch of grace” and decides to “give herself to God.” After she is refused by a cloistered community, she joins the extern congregation of the Congrégation Notre-Dame de Troyes. For thirteen years she lives a very enriching, if sometimes dangerous, experience, which will prepare her for her future adventures in the New World.

➔ *What does Marguerite do while she is in the extern congregation?*

1. Because her mother died, she stays at home and takes care of her younger brothers and sisters.
2. In addition to catechism, she teaches reading and writing to children and women in the poorer areas of Troyes. Her objective is for them to learn how to earn a living.
3. She signs up as a sailor on a ship and travels the seven seas battling pirates.

B- In 1639, a group of Frenchmen, led by Jérôme Le Royer de la Dauversière and Jean-Jacques Olier, found the Société Notre-Dame de Montréal. This group wishes to establish a colony of settlers on the island of Montreal in New France. The establishment of Ville-Marie by Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve and Jeanne Mance, in 1642, will be pivotal in the life of Marguerite Bourgeoys.

➔ *What is the main purpose of the Société Notre-Dame de Montréal?*

1. Market maple syrup and sell it to the English and Spanish colonies in the Americas.
2. Establish a fishing port and export fur pelts in France.
3. Found an institution which will embody the ideal of the first Christian community for the purpose of converting the Amerindians to Christianity and spreading the Christian faith.

C- In 1652, ten years after the establishment of Ville-Marie, Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve returns to France in search of recruits. The colony needs to be repopulated because many of the first 40 settlers either went back to their native land or died. The Congrégation de Notre-Dame à Troyes offers to establish a convent in Ville-Marie, as the Ursulines did in Quebec City. But de Maisonneuve declines their proposal because he thinks that life in the colony is too difficult, precarious and unpredictable for a community of cloistered sisters. He is willing, however, to take with him a secular teacher, Marguerite Bourgeoys, who had efficiently administered and expanded the extern congregation.

➔ **What mission was Marguerite entrusted in New France?**

1. Befriend Jeanne Mance, foundress of the Hôtel-Dieu, first hospital of Ville-Marie, thanks to the generosity of Angélique Faure de Bullion.
2. Open the first school of Ville-Marie and implement the basis of education in the fledgling society.
3. Cook up home-made taffy to pacify the Iroquois so that they would stop attacking the French.



1652 - Troyes, France
Marguerite Bourgeoys prepares to meet Paul
Chomedey de Maisonneuve for the first time.
She will travel with him to New France.

Illustration: Francis Back

- D- Jesuit and Recollet missionaries had attempted to convert the Amerindians to Christianity as early as 1611 and 1615. In addition to its “duty to evangelize”, France, like the other colonizing powers, also has commercial interests in Canada such as finding precious metals and a route to Asia.

In the end, it is the fur trade that motivates France to form an alliance with the Montagnais Amerindian nation, declare war on the Iroquois and establish posts and then permanent warehouses in the territory.

However, populating New France was always a difficult challenge for France.

➔ ***Which of these measures HAS NO bearing on the challenge of populating the colony?***

1. The establishment of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés in 1627. In exchange for the monopoly on the fur trade, this state-administered company is mandated to assist thousands of settlers establish themselves in the colony.
2. The peace treaties with the Amerindian nations in view of ensuring the safety of the colony and of its settlers.
3. The high demand for felt hats made from beaver pelts for fashion-conscious gentlemen in Europe.

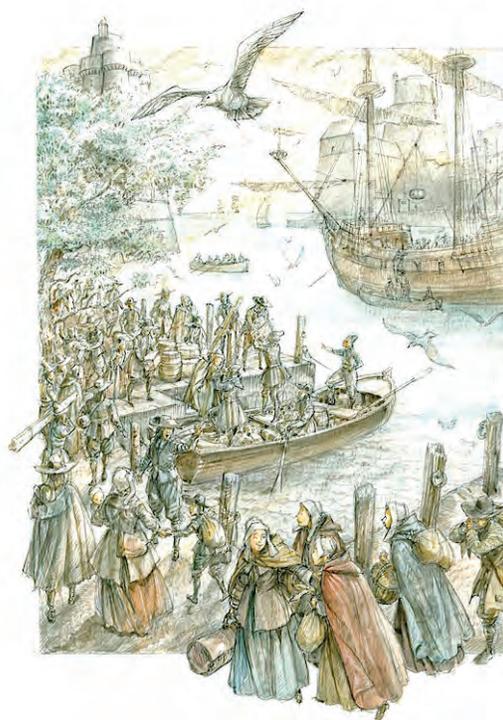
Marguerite sets out on her mission to Canada.

Did you know?

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean, between France and Montreal... takes about 7 hours by plane, but could take up to 3 months by sea in 1650.

1659 - La Rochelle, France
Marguerite Bourgeoys and her companions board the ship to New France.

Illustration: Francis Back



1659 - Marguerite and her companions tirelessly care for the sick and comfort the dying.

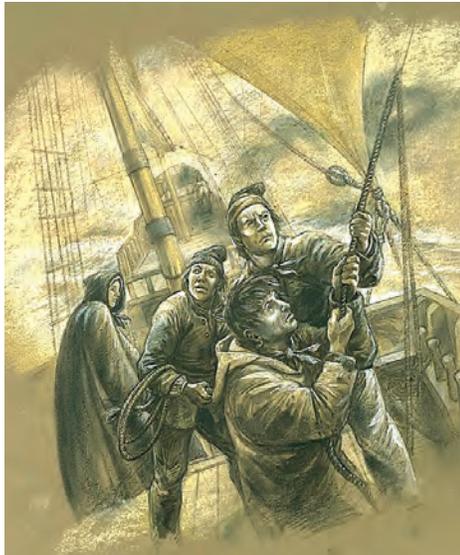
Illustration: Francis Back

Marguerite's Odyssey - Challenge 2

A- A young, unmarried, lay woman travelling alone among a group of men!?

What comes to mind when you read the 17th century French proverb below?

*“When you go to war, pray once,
When you go to sea, pray twice.”*



1653 - Crossing the Atlantic Ocean is extremely dangerous.

Illustration: Francis Back

The proverb certainly reflects the idea that the sea is supremely powerful and can be a terrifying and awe-inspiring place, doesn't it? The crossing of the Atlantic on a sailing vessel is long, difficult and perilous and many people perish at sea. While few men dare make the trip, Marguerite Bourgeoys travels back and forth between Canada and France seven times! In addition to her voyage to Ville-Marie, she returns to France three times to recruit companions or to handle business of the congregation.

The dangers at sea are, of course, violent storms, pirate attacks or naval battles against enemy powers. But over and above that, sailors and passengers have to cope extremely hard living conditions aboard ship!

➤ *From the statements below, choose those you associate with living conditions on a ship at sea during the 17th century (the others refer more to travelling on a cruise ship in the 21st century!):*

Onboard doctors and nurses are on hand at all times and medication is available at the infirmary.

In cases of serious illness or accidents, it is possible to contact emergency services by radio transmission.

Living in close quarters does not permit privacy or tranquility.

Private rooms are comfortable and quite spacious.

Drinkable water must be rationed so that it does not run out during the voyage.

Meals prepared by chefs are copious, healthy and delicious.

Because there are no toilets, chamber pots are used and the contents thrown overboard.

In addition to scurvy, the crew could be stricken by the plague or other often mortal diseases.

To relax, passengers are welcome to enjoy spa facilities, such as massages.

There is non-stop entertainment, such as, the casino, shows, discotheques, swimming pools, arcades, gyms, shops and much more.

If weak winds cause the voyage to be longer than expected, food can fall short. Already unsavoury, it could actually go stale or dry out.

Hygiene is practically non-existent. Filth and odours are part of everyday life onboard.

The ship is luxurious, safe and enjoyable. A place for a great vacation!

To avoid epidemics, the dead cannot remain onboard while waiting to arrive to destination for burial. Their bodies must be thrown overboard.

B- Pioneers in New France: super heroes!

When Marguerite Bourgeoys arrives in Canada, in 1653, the land is still uncultivated and barely colonized. The population of all of New France is only about 700 souls. Quebec City and Trois-Rivières are a little more established, but in Ville-Marie, there is much to do and life is extremely difficult!



1653 - The first time Marguerite Bourgeoys arrives in Ville-Marie, there are not enough children to warrant opening a school. She goes from house to house to teach women to read and write.

Illustration: Francis Back

The forest is still untamed and filled with obstacles and dangers. Trees must be cut down with axes, stumps and boulders need to be removed, the land cultivated, animals bred and raised, houses built and the colony has to be populated and organized. Fresh supplies from France can arrive only during the four or five warm months of the year, consequently the settlers have to become self-reliant very quickly. They have to make everything themselves: their furniture, their clothing. They have to pick fruits, roots and berries in the woods and learn how to hunt and fish. Allied Amerindians help the settlers, especially in the fur trade, but they must always be wary of Iroquois attacks! At first, the threat is so great and ever-present that Marguerite has to live within the fortress.

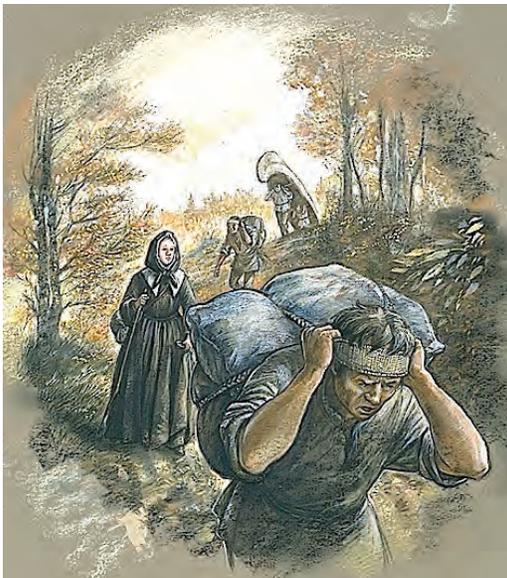
Marguerite's Odyssey - Challenge 2

Marguerite is not afraid to travel in the worst storms to go where she is needed.

Illustration: Sister Victoire Roy, CND



During the first few decades of colonization, the life of the settlers in New France is filled with hardships and perils. But these immigrants still wish for themselves and their families a better life than the one they left behind in France, where they had little chance, if any, of becoming land owners. It is from the 18th century on, once the land has been opened up and cultivated, that life in the colony finally improves.



1653 - When waterways can no longer be travelled, supplies and canoes have to be carried overland. This activity is called portage

Illustration: Francis Back

➤ *From the statements below, choose those you associate with life in Ville-Marie and in New France in the 17th century:*

The homes are comfortable, well insulated and heated.

The territory is made up of impenetrable forests. There are very few roads; the rivers and streams are the main ways to travel.

Travelling is long and arduous. The canoe is very useful. During the winter, snow shoes are essential.

Because of threats of Iroquois or British attacks, safety was always foremost on people's minds.

Travelling from Montreal to Quebec City by bus or train takes just a few hours.

Electric lights and appliances such as refrigerators, washers and dryers, dish washers and microwave ovens make life much easier.

In winter, it is extremely cold and apparel brought from Europe must be adapted to the climate. In summer, the heat and humidity as well as the mosquitoes are unbearable.

Typhus, measles and chicken pox are highly contagious diseases which affect many families.

Telephone or internet communications are very easy.

People get water from streams or wells. They heat it on the fire so they can wash themselves from time to time.

Travelling on the high-way by car from downtown Montreal to Pointe-aux-Trembles takes just 20 minutes.

Wood is used for heating. Hot-water bottles are placed under the sheets to warm the beds made of straw or reeds. Bedtime is at sunset because the days are exhausting and candles must not be wasted.

Dim light is also provided by a type of lamp called "bec-de-corbeau". For entertainment, people played card games or music.

Marguerite contributes to the development of Ville-Marie.

With the arrival of new recruits, Ville-Marie is revived and a new society emerges. Marguerite Bourgeoys joins Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve and Jeanne Mance, foundress of Hôtel-Dieu hospital, to restart the colony.

Marguerite participates actively in the development of Ville-Marie and of New France by implementing several initiatives relative to faith and education: their heritage is still present today.

- ➞ ***Read the statements on the right and connect each one with its corresponding date on the timeline on the left.*** Find clues by looking closely at the illustrations!



1653

At the Mountain Mission, on the Mont-Royal, a group of Marguerite Bourgeoys's companions teach young Amerindian girls. Two of them will enter the Congrégation and become teachers themselves.



1655

Marguerite Bourgeoys receives the "King's Wards" (*Filles du Roy*) and prepares them for their future roles as wives and mothers. She also teaches them the skills required for this new way of life.



April 30,
1658

On a piece of land on Pointe-Saint-Charles, Marguerite Bourgeoys begins a farm to meet the needs of the Congregation. The farm provides security for the work of the community until the first quarter of the 20th century.



1662

Marguerite Bourgeoys asks the settlers to help her fulfill her dream: the construction of a pilgrimage chapel of stone which would be accessible on foot. After many delays and unforeseen circumstances, it will finally be constructed from 1675 to 1678.



1663-
1673

From the very beginning, Marguerite Bourgeoys helps the poor and educates women. She will set up workshops to teach them the practical skills and know-how to permit them to earn a living.



1668

On the land where the farm is situated, Marguerite sets up a house which will receive the "King's Wards" (*Filles du Roy*) until 1673. Maison Saint-Gabriel, which will be declared monument of national interest in 1965, will also include a small school.



1676

Marguerite opens the first school in Montreal in... a former stable! The school is public, free and mixed. The children of the colonists, who had helped her to convert the stable into a school, are taught catechism and learn how to read, write and count.

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.

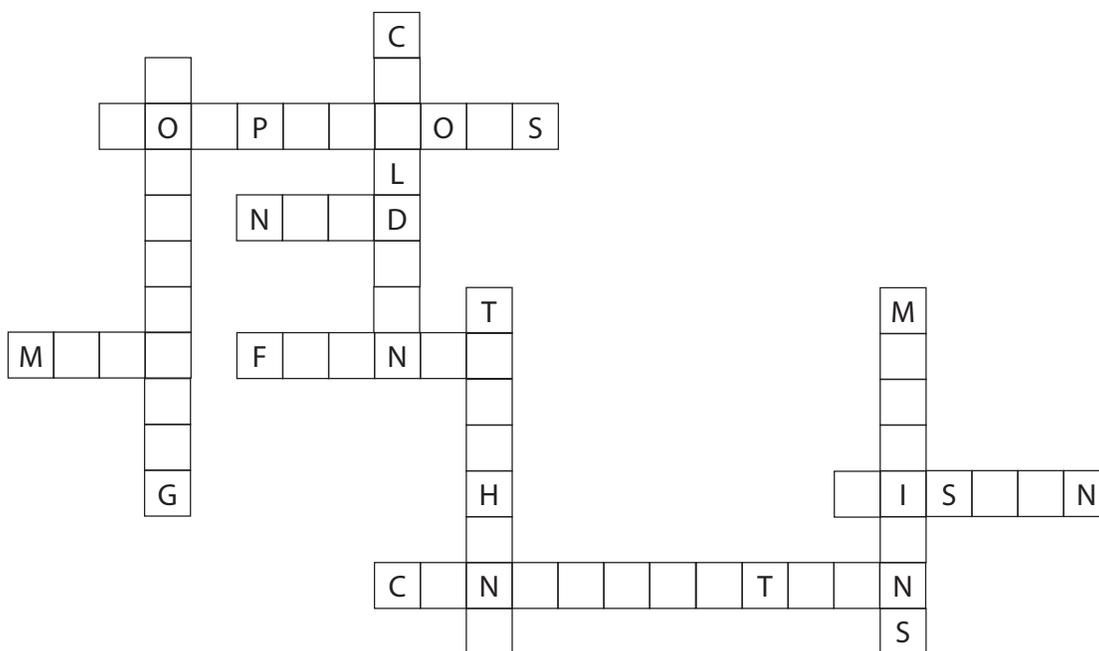
Illustration: Francis Back

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



Continuing the work of Marguerite Bourgeoys in peacetime and in war.

From 1700 to 1763, New France and the Congrégation de Notre-Dame go through very turbulent times.

➤ *Read the list of words below. Can you find their proper place in the text that follows? You will find out about important events that took place during those years!*

SISTERS	LOUISBOURG	HEART	CULTURE
GREAT BRITAIN	ACADIA	INFLUENCE	REGIME
MISSIONS	CONQUERED	PEACE	DEPORTS
BATTLE	MONTREAL	PARIS	QUEBEC
EXAMPLE	INSPIRATION	LARGER	AMERINDIAN

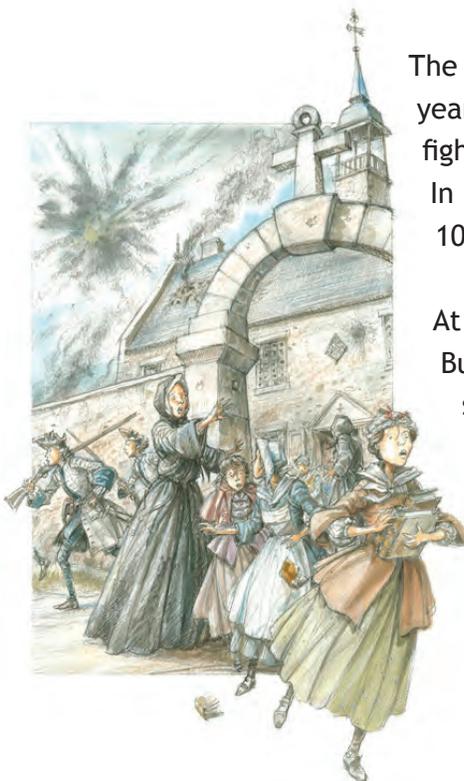
On January 12, 1700, Marguerite Bourgeoys dies as she has lived, her soul turned to God, and her _____ to her neighbour.

Marguerite met life's hardships with courage and serenity. Her _____ continues to inspire the Sisters of the Congregation which she founded. The _____ which she discovered in the journeying life of Mary is a "spirit to preserve" and is handed down from generation to generation.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the Great _____ of Montreal is signed between France and 39 _____ nations. However conflicts break out once again in Europe. France cedes to Great Britain her claims to _____, Newfoundland and Hudson Bay. Peace is restored and maintained for 30 years. The economy diversifies and the population increases, but the fate of New France will soon be sealed...

The inhabitants of Canada develop a _____ which is distinct from that of their home land. It is differentiated by their new way of life and by their living closely with the Amerindian peoples. The Church has a great _____ on the society of New France, whether social, cultural, economic or political.

For its part, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Montréal is busy meeting the needs of _____ families. It expands the Mother House and educates new teachers. It builds a boarding school in Montreal and establishes or restores several village schools and _____ in both the _____ and Montreal regions. It even opens a school on Cape Breton Island, where the fortress of _____ was erected.



The Louisbourg fortress
under enemy attack.

Illustration: Francis Back

The Seven Years' War begins in North America in 1754, and two years later in Europe. France and _____ are still fighting over their respective claims on North American soil. In 1755, Great Britain systematically _____ about 10,000 of 13,000 Acadians to their other colonies.

At the beginning of the war, the French win a number of victories. But in 1758, the Louisbourg fortress is _____ for the second time in its history. In 1759, Quebec City is besieged by the British navy. On September 13, the French are conquered during the _____ of the Plains of Abraham. In September 1760, _____ also falls. In 1763, the Treaty of _____ is signed ending the war. France cedes most of its North American possessions, including New France, to the British.

Like all the conquered population of the colony, the _____ of the Congregation must adapt and face the uncertainties of life under the new _____.

The Congregation adapts to the new régime and evolves.

- Read the text on the post-Conquest years and the evolution of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame in the 1800's, then choose whether the eight statements which follow are TRUE OR FALSE.

From one régime to another... and from one century to another.

Following the Conquest, many notable and military families decided to return to France. Most of the French settlers, however, remained in the colony. Administrators, merchants, as well as settlers from Great Britain or the thirteen colonies to the south also came to live in the Province of Quebec. Many of these new colonists were Protestant and therefore hostile towards the French language and Catholic religion. The tensions among French Canadians, English Canadians and native Amerindians continued into the next century.



Children of Irish soldiers.

Illustration: Francis Back

For ten years, Great Britain had to face the growing disloyalty of its thirteen colonies that would become the United States. To avoid a potential French Canadian rebellion, it promulgated the Quebec Act in 1774. Among other things, this Act gave back certain powers to the land-owning seigneurs and the Catholic clergy. However, while it granted settlers freedom of religion, it did not assure them any new political powers.

After the American Revolution (1776), the United States also attempted to conquer the former New France! Montreal was temporarily besieged but Quebec City resisted. Once peace was restored between Great Britain and the United States in 1782, the Province of Quebec received thousands of persons who had remained loyal to the British Crown (loyalists).

The Constitutional Act (1791) divided the Province of Quebec in two provinces. Upper Canada corresponded to today's Province of Ontario, and Lower Canada, to the Province of Quebec.

The Union Act (1840) united Upper Canada and Lower Canada under one government: United Canada.

As for the Congrégation de Notre-Dame...

Not only did the Seven Years' War destroy Louisbourg but also many of the buildings of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame, especially in the Quebec City area. Montreal was somewhat spared. In 1768, the Mother House of the Sisters and all their belongings were destroyed by fire. This was the second large fire in their history. Thanks to the generosity of the Sulpicians, the Bishop and other benefactors, and especially thanks to the work and sacrifice of the Sisters, the Mother House and Chapel were rebuilt.



Île Saint-Paul.

Illustration: Francis Back

The reconstruction years were also spent attempting to reduce poverty and worry caused by war and the change in régime. The Sisters themselves had to close two missions (Lachine and Champlain), but two more were established. In 1769, the Congregation concluded the purchase of Île Saint-Paul, whose farms financially sustained the Congregation and its missions.

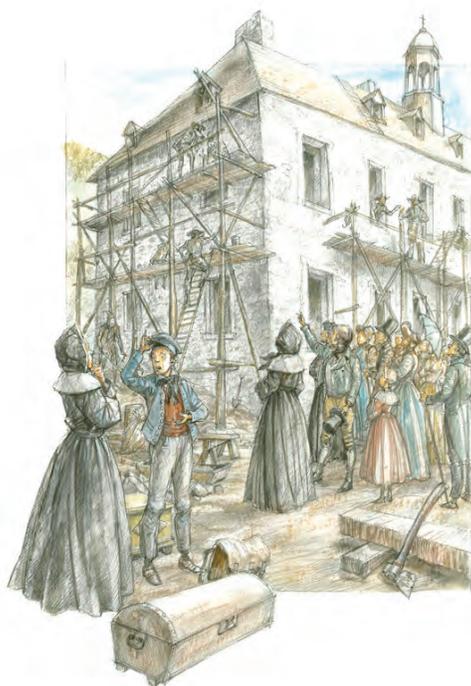
During the first half of the 19th century, the Congregation saw an important increase in the number of members and new missions opening at an unprecedented pace: three in the 1820's, three in the 1830's and eight in the 1840's, namely in Kingston. Sisters also taught in French and in English public schools. At the Mother House in Montreal, they taught the children of poor Irish families.

The role of education in the new society.

When Great Britain began ruling its new colony, it planned to establish the Protestant religion and assimilate the French Canadians. To gradually accomplish this goal, one of the main strategies was to open English Protestant schools in every district and township.

However, maintaining the clergy and Catholic schools, as stipulated in the Quebec Act, protected the Catholic religion and the French language, especially in Lower Canada. Therefore, the work performed by teachers, among them the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame, played a significant historical role in the preservation of the *fait français* (French language and culture) in America.

From the 19th century, denominational schools were gradually integrated into the educational system, which was now administered by the State. The Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame continued to teach in public schools while they also administered their own boarding schools.



1823 - Mission in Sainte-Marie de Beauce.

Illustration: Francis Back



1841 - Kingston, capital of United Canada.

Questions

1. The new régime, put in place after the British Conquest did not bring any change in the lives of the settlers of New France. TRUE OR FALSE?
2. 1768 was the first time that the Mother House of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame was destroyed by fire. TRUE OR FALSE?
3. War and the change in régime brought about poverty and worry among the French Canadian population. TRUE OR FALSE?
4. Farming on Île Saint-Paul financially sustained the Congregation and its missions. TRUE OR FALSE?
5. During the first half of the 19th century, the Congregation recruited an important number of members. This enabled it to open several missions. TRUE OR FALSE?
6. The Sisters of the Congregation only taught children of notable families in private schools. TRUE OR FALSE?
7. The Congrégation de Notre-Dame never opened schools outside of Quebec. TRUE OR FALSE?
8. The clergy and Catholic schools preserved the Catholic religion and the French language. TRUE OR FALSE?

The Congregation de Notre-Dame broadens its horizons and faces new challenges.

- *The text below covers the period from 1850 to 1960. Read the text, and then find the word or phrase that does not belong in the statements below.*

The Historical Context in Canada.

During the 1850's, United Canada experienced a certain political instability. Following a series of alliances, two political parties emerged and succeeded one another at the head of the Government: this is known as a bipartisan or two-party system. On July 1, 1867, The British North America Act created the Dominion of Canada, which divided three colonies into four Provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The other Provinces and Territories joined the Confederation later. Tensions were still being felt among the Amerindians, the French-speaking Canadians and the English-speaking Canadians.

From 1850, following the implementation of free trade with the United States, the country began a first phase of industrialization. The manufacturing industry flourished. This era was also marked by railway expansion which connected the country from sea to sea. Important needs in manpower resulted in continued waves of immigration, especially toward the Canadian West. In the East, over 400,000 French Canadians immigrated to the United States for work. Also, the emigration of many farmers and rural workers towards the cities resulted in the growth of urban centers. A French Canadian bourgeoisie emerged.

The 20th century witnessed a second phase of industrialization tied to the exploitation of natural resources (aluminum, hydroelectricity, pulp and paper, mining, etc.). This period brought about economic expansion, however working conditions in the urban centers deteriorated. Thus, unions were born. Many groups against poverty, delinquency, alcoholism, etc. were organized. Movements sprang up advocating women's rights: women very rarely had access to higher education, and obtained the right to vote only from 1916 to 1940, depending on the Province.

Three tragic events occurred during the first half of the 20th century: two world wars that killed millions and, between them, the Great Depression of 1929. After World War I (1914-1918), Canada became an independent country within the British Commonwealth. Following World War II, Canada went through a period of prosperity. Its population increased thanks to a steady flow of immigration and a baby boom.

As for the Congrégation de Notre-Dame...

From 1855 to 1900, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame established 90 new Catholic missions, 44 of which were outside of the Province of Quebec. On the eve of the 20th century, the Congregation numbered 1,157 Sisters active in Canada and the United States. It was essential for them to learn and adapt to the system of education in each Province and each State in which they were located. They also had to take into consideration the various needs of their students: daughters and sons of fishers, miners, industrialists and merchants from rural areas or urban centers.



In 1860, the first mission of the Congregation in the United States (Bourbonnais, Illinois) is established.

Photography: [between 1883 and 1910]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal



In 1899, the women's branch of the École normale Jacques-Cartier de Montréal opens under the jurisdiction of the Congregation. In 1911, the school moves to this building.

Photography: [19-]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal

Some schools were private while others were public or parish schools. The Sisters thought that it was particularly important for them to develop education programmes for girls. From 1881 to 1898, they wrote eleven manuals for their classes and for other schools. These manuals covered various subjects: grammar, history, geography, drawing and accounting.

In 1900, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame was awarded a medal and a diploma at the Paris World Fair for its presentation of works done by students in their different schools. At the end of the 19th century, the Sisters opened the first Catholic college for women in North America in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Also in the first decade of the 20th century, the Congregation became involved in a struggle which provoked suspicion and hostility: the access to university studies for women! In 1908, it succeeded in establishing the École d'enseignement supérieur in Montreal, which became, in 1926, Collège Marguerite-Bourgeoys. In 1944, the English-language section of the Collège Marguerite-Bourgeoys separated and became Marianopolis College. The Congregation also opened women's colleges in New York and Ottawa, in 1931 and in 1932 respectively.



Mount Saint Bernard College, first Catholic college for women in North America, established by the Congregation in Antigonish, Nova Scotia in 1883.

Photography: [ca. 1897]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal



Culinary Art class at École normale classico-ménagère, Saint-Pascal-de-Kamouraska.

Photography: [19-]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal



Typewriting class at académie Marguerite-Lemoine.

Photography: [1925 or 1926]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal

Beginning in 1907, young women could take business classes, designed for them by the Congregation. Those who graduated from this excellent programme easily found jobs which were better paid than those in the manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the Congregation continued to play a major role in the establishment of domestic sciences programmes and specialized courses in the various trades within the French-speaking and English-speaking institutions in Quebec and in Canada.



Class in educational methods for children with special needs at collège Marguerite-Bourgeoys.

Photography: [1940 or 1941]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal



Schoolyard at Chofu, Japon

Photography: [ca. 1980]
Archives Congrégation de Notre-Dame - Montréal

During the first half of the 20th century, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame became a leader in the training of religious and non-religious teachers. Affiliated with the Université de Montréal, it established programmes of higher education in pedagogy and music in 1926.

In May, 1932, the Congregation made a major decision: to open a mission in Japan! Like Marguerite Bourgeoys, the five Sisters who were sent to Asia could not open their school right away. They therefore found other ways to be of service, namely by helping the women in the region. They opened a dispensary and a kindergarten. They also taught catechism and gave private lessons in French, English and music. Their numbers increased. When World War II broke out, life in that part of the world became very difficult for the Sisters living in Japan who, as enemy aliens, were prisoners of war. They were forced to close their schools. Their convent was seized and used as a prison for enemy prisoners of war. Some of the Sisters were sent back to Canada in exchange for prisoners of war; the others were sent to live with another religious congregation and, like all the population of Japan, lived terrifying and painful moments. After the war, the Sisters resumed their work. Their schools multiplied; they received and educated children, very few of whom were Christian.

➤ *Which answer does not belong?*

1. The four Provinces of Canada at the time of Confederation in 1867 were New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba.
2. In the 19th century there were still tensions among the French, the Amerindians, the French-speaking Canadians and the English-speaking Canadians.
3. From 1850, Canada saw: a first phase of industrialization, the building of a railway system, the creation of Nunavut, continued waves of immigration and the emigration from rural areas and the growth of urban centers.
4. In the first half of the 20th century, Canada witnessed the following events: a second phase of industrialization, economic expansion, unions, groups against poverty and delinquency, movements advocating women's rights (including the right to education), the first man on the moon, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II and a baby boom.
5. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the Congrégation de Notre-Dame developed several educational programmes for elementary and high schools as well as for universities. They covered grammar, history, drawing, accounting, business, domestic science, trades, aerospace science, pedagogy and music.
6. From 1850 to 1950, the Congregation extended its missions throughout Quebec, in the rest of Canada, in the United States, in Spain and in Japan.
7. The Sisters of the Congregation taught girls and sometimes boys, young women, children of fishers, miners, industrialists or merchants, in rural areas or urban centers, the poor and the rich, Catholics and non-Catholics, religious and non-religious teachers, political leaders, etc.