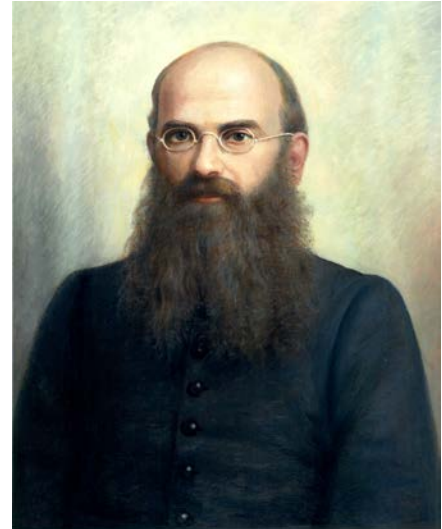


Joseph-Onésime Brousseau (1853 – 1920)

Born in Sainte-Hénédine's parish in Dorchester, at the border between Beauce and Bellechasse (Quebec), Joseph-Onésime Brousseau is the youngest son of a farming family. Since he was a child he feels the call to priesthood. He attends the Collège de Lévis and the Seminary in Quebec in order to be ordained priest, in 1878.

Four years later he becomes parish priest at Saint-Damien. In order to meet the needs of the elderly and of the orphans, he builds a convent-hospital in 1892 and looks for sisters who could help him in his works. With only "one dollar" in his pocket and with absolute faith in Divine Providence, he recruits the first four religious, of which Virginie Fournier will



be the first and the foundress of the new community, named Notre-Dame du Perpétuel-Secours (NDPS). Together with the foundress he writes the first constitutions in 1894 and gives the new Institute its missionary orientation: "Your motto shall be *Deus Providebit*. Always have an unshakable confidence in Divine Providence, who is a mother to you."

Father Brousseau is the first in the region to apply the selective methods in logging and rotational crops. In 1899, the bishop of Quebec names him "farmer missionary". In 1902, he founds the community of the Brothers of Notre-Dame des Champs that has mission to work the land, teach farming to orphans and turn them into good farmers and good Christians.

To provide for his works, Father Brousseau doesn't hesitate to ask for handouts: he begs for the poor and since 1896 he becomes a pilgrim, always "on the road". From 1882 to 1920, he calls for charity and with the collections is able to build and rebuild more than ten buildings. His works of providence are still visible and prove he was a man of vision and of bold faith. In 1915, Cardinal Louis-Nazaire Bégin honors him by appointing him honorary canon of the Metropolitan Chapter of the Church of Quebec. He dies on April 18, 1920, at the age of 66. He leaves behind an important legacy of agricultural education as well as of economic and religious development in the Chaudière-Appalaches Region.

LINK: <http://congndps.qc.ca/>

QUOTATION: "On my own I cannot do anything; with God I can do all things."