

Jeanne Le Ber (1662-1714)

Jeanne Le Ber was born on January 4, 1662 in Ville-Marie (Montreal). She is baptized the same day and Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve is her godfather and Jeanne Mance her godmother. At an early age she feels attracted by the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and enjoys silence and prayer. To complete her formal education she spends three years, 1674 to 1677, as a boarder with the Ursulines in Quebec, where her aunt teaches. The Ursulines are impressed by her many acts of self-denial and are disappointed when, at the age of fifteen, she returns to her family in Montreal.



She is a pensive, withdrawn, and introverted young lady, who daily spends much time in prayer and in adoration of the Sacrament. In accordance with her confessor, when she turns eighteen, she decides to live a secluded life. With her parents' permission she retires to a cell at the rear of the church of the Hôtel-Dieu, which serves as parish church at that time. Jeanne Le Ber remains undecided about entering a regular order and taking permanent vows; nevertheless, her determination to shun the attractive life her family offered becomes evident.

On June 24, 1685, she takes a simple vow of perpetual seclusion, chastity, and poverty. When she hears that the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame plan to build a church on their property she gives them generous financial assistance on condition that they reserve for her a three-room apartment directly behind the altar, so that she can view the Blessed Sacrament without leaving her quarters. On August 5, 1695, she takes the solemn vows of a recluse. She spends much time in making church vestments and altar cloths and in fine embroidery. Six or seven hours a day are devoted to prayer and meditation, she receives communion four times a week.

She introduces the practice of the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and makes a donation to the Sisters of the Congrégation for its observance. Throughout the colony she enjoys a great fame and continues to receive distinguished visitors from time to time. She dies on October 3 and is buried next to her father.

LINK:

<http://reclusesmiss.org/wp/>