



Life



Mother Gamelin and her works

The influence of Mother Gamelin on her daughters and her worldwide reputation for holiness

Historical File

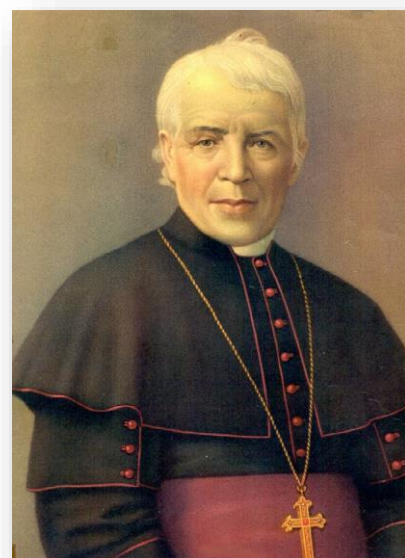


We know well the life of this great woman of charity who set such a wonderful example during her life time and whom God chose to realize the designs of Providence on the Congregation of which she became the Foundress.

The day after her death, which occurred on September 23, 1851, the newspapers of the time said: "Eternal thanks to God, the Author of all perfection, for having given such a heroine to our city, such an example to our century!"

The Archives preserve numerous testimonies given by contemporaries of Mother Gamelin following her death or in other circumstances during her life. All of them are proof of her reputation for holiness; the following are examples:

"By rejoicing over your healing, I hope that the health you have recovered will make you an apostle of devotion and trust in your most pious foundress, so that she may be honored and invoked everywhere." (Bishop Bourget to Sister Marie-de-la-Providence who has just been cured of a nagging headache, following a novena that Bishop Bourget advised her to make to Mother Gamelin. —Bishop Bourget clearly expressed his desire that Mother Gamelin be beatified and canonized one day).



Ignace Bourget,
Bishop of
Montreal

"[...] Mother Gamelin is one of the religious glories of our country. [...] The virtues of Mother Gamelin shine brightly on every page



of the book which recounts her life [Vie de Mère Gamelin 1900]; and in reading this edifying work, one is filled with the desire and hope to see the Church soon recognize authentically the sanctity of the illustrious heroine. This event will happen sooner or later; it will be a great joy, an unspeakable happiness for your Community. [...] We fervently pray to God that you will soon be allowed to publicly honor and invoke the one whom you venerate as your mother and to whom we have long devoted our most profound gratitude. (Joseph-Médard Énard, Bishop of Valleyfield, 1900.)» (Joseph-Médard Énard, Bishop of Valleyfield, 1900).



Joseph-Médard Énard, Bishop of Valleyfield.
Photo : Archives of the City of Montréal

For his part, Canon Joseph-Alfred Archambault, who had written on November 11, 1895, of his great joy at the favors obtained through the intercession of Mother Gamelin, [Healings of Sister Lucain and Sister Marcienne] wrote again, when he was bishop of Joliette, on May 25, 1909, suggesting that a request be presented to the priests in the First Plenary Council of Canada, in September 1910, with the benevolent authorization of the Archbishop of Montreal, so that the cause for the beatification of Mother Gamelin be opened without delay.

"... In reading the Life of Mother Gamelin, one feels that everything is true and that the Holy Spirit spoke in the ear and heart of the good Sister Rose-de-Marie [...] We pray with all our strength that the good God will make His will known to the very worthy present Archbishop of Montreal [Bishop Bruchési], who will no doubt be happy to initiate in Rome the Cause of beatification of this person so distinguished by the eminence of her virtue and the vigor of her works." (Mother Bernarda, Santiago, 1900).



Mother Bernarda Morin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence in Chile
Photo : Bernarda Morin Province Archives

"The instructions and advice that our Reverend Mother gave to the community seemed to me to be dictated by the sincerity of a soul that has only God in view, and ardently desires holiness... My ardent wishes and those of the community are that this illustrious mother would be glorified in heaven and on earth. To this end, we pray to God to grant us the grace that the Holy Church will soon award her the honors of sanctity". Mother Bernarda (1908).

"She was full of delicate attentions for the sick sisters... She knew how to put so much respect, simplicity and affability in her relations with all the unfortunate ones...". Sister Marie-de-l'Enfant-Jésus (1908) [The religious recalls how, in 1900, she prayed to Mother Gamelin for a cure for a sore knee, to be able to return to her beloved Indians*. The cure was obtained].

* We kept the expression used in the texts of the time.



"God, having found her worthy to receive the crown she so justly deserved by her many sacrifices and heroic virtues, hastened to call her to himself ... leaving her young community plunged in the deepest sorrow [...] May we be able to follow in her footsteps to share one day her glory and happiness in heaven. May her memory remain forever engraved in our hearts... May God be glorified as well as his humble servant Mother Gamelin."
Sister Marie-du-St-Sacrement, Vancouver. 1908.

Mother Gamelin's reputation for holiness continued to grow, as did the desire to work for her cause of beatification and canonization. The confidence of the people increased and the favors obtained multiplied.

Since 1934, the General Council had planned to set up a fund to provide for the eventual expenses that the work would entail, and it was decided that the money received by the Sister Jubilarians would be put into a special fund for this purpose. This obligation ceased in 1970, as more and more friends and people who had received favors thanked her with offerings for the advancement of her Cause.

Providence was watching over us... At the time, Sister Thérèse Frigon was teaching in the secondary school, while pursuing her studies in library science. She was writing her thesis, which consisted of researching all the volumes, reviews and articles written on the life and work of Mother Emilie Gamelin. Her thesis director was Mrs. Marie-Claire Daveluy. When the latter presented this thesis to the General Council, she told them: *'If one day, you wish to begin the work of the beatification and canonization of your Mother Gamelin, you have in Sister Thérèse Frigon, the person who is well prepared for this work.'* This was in 1958. Her words did not fall on deaf ears ...

and a research office was opened at the Motherhouse on Fullum Street on June 20, 1960, the same day as the 40th birthday of Sister Thérèse Frigon (Sister Paul-du-Sauveur) who became the director of the Emilie Gamelin Centre, with a mandate to work on archival research on Mother Emilie Gamelin, while Father Paul-Marie Pilon, o.p., was appointed to direct her in the historical study of all the documentation collected. This was an assiduous labor of 17 years, in 37 archives, with 1500 hours of research in the Archives of the Archbishopric of Montreal alone.

The first Roman postulator, Father Angelo Mitri, o.m.i., was mandated in January 1977; he officially opened the Cause of beatification of Mother Gamelin in the Providence Congregation on October 7, 1978, in the presence of more than 800 Sisters of Providence.

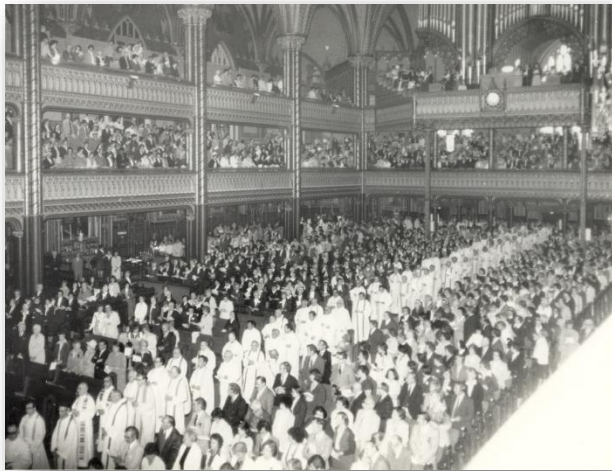


Opening of the Cause by the Postulator in October 1978. From left to right: Marie-Thérèse Plante, SP, Secretary, Thérèse Frigon, SP, Director of the Office of the Cause, Father Angelo Mitri, O.M.I., Gilberte Villeneuve, SP, General Superior, Yvette Demers, SP, Assistant to the Office of the Cause. Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause

Following the reception of the Nihil Obstat (authorization given by the Pope) on December 8, 1980, Bishop Paul Grégoire proceeded, on May 31, 1981, to the diocesan Introduction of the Cause, in the



Basilica of Notre Dame in Montreal, in the presence of more than 3500 people, with 150 concelebrants.



Diocesan introduction of the Cause at Notre-Dame Basilica of Montreal.
Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause

The other steps towards Venerability were completed, including the writing of the Positio on the life and reputation for holiness of Mother Gamelin, and the ceremony took place in Rome on December 23, 1993.

Then, in 1985, the head of the Bureau of the Cause and a retired doctor studied the many accounts of special favors obtained through prayers through Mother Gamelin's intercession, and in January 1997, a case of acute lymphoblastic leukemia was recognized. The documents sent to Rome were studied by doctors and theologians and the decree on the MIRACLE was proclaimed by the Pope on December 18, 2000.



Proclamation of the decree concerning the miracle
Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause

Finally, the ceremony of the beatification crowned forty years of serious and persevering work and gathered in Rome more than 300 Sisters of Providence and many faithful devotees of Mother Gamelin.



Yannick Fréchette, healed thanks to the intercession of Mother Gamelin, receives the blessing of the Holy Father.
Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause



Sister Thérèse Frigon, the former Vice-postulator of the Cause, receives the blessing of the Holy Father.
Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause



Sister Yvette Demers, former assistant of the Cause and current vice-postulator of the Cause, receives the blessing of the Holy Father.
Archives of the Emilie Gamelin Cause





Since that glorious day, the Bureau of the Cause continues to receive messages of trust, gratitude, and admiration for our Blessed Emilie; they attest to the desire that soon the steps already underway for her canonization will soon come to a happy conclusion.

These messages come not only from Canada, the United States, Chile, and Haiti but also from Cuba, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, El Salvador, Reunion Island, France, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Cameroon, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Pakistan, Slovakia, Hong Kong, Vietnam, etc.

In this year of the 20th anniversary of the beatification of our foundress, Mother Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin, may we, by our fidelity to imitate her virtues and her devotion and by our fervent prayer to God-Providence, through Our Lady of Sorrows, obtain this favor desired since her death 170 years ago, and which we wish with all our hearts for the glory of

God and the salvation of our suffering world which needs models of courage, perseverance and FAITH.

Yvette Demers, SP
Vice Postulator
Emilie Gamelin Cause

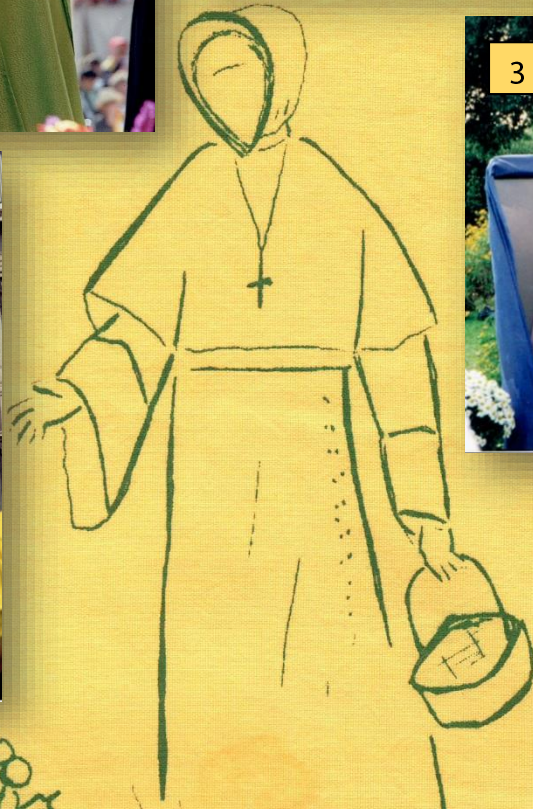
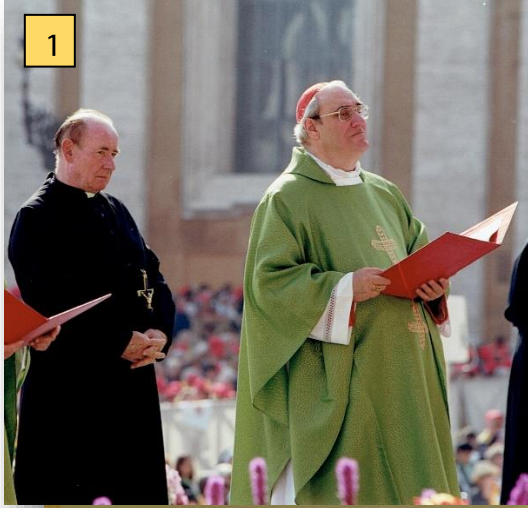


See you!

We leave you with a few selected images from the beatification of Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin 20 years ago!

Communication Office
Providence International Centre





Emilie Tavernier-Gamelin
Rome 7-10-2001-Roma



1. The Archbishop of Montreal, Jean-Claude Turcotte, asks the Holy Father for the beatification of Mother Gamelin. 2. Priests during the distribution of communion. 3. Yannick, Sister Thérèse and Father Fitzpatrick, Postulator of the Cause, at the Canadian Embassy. 4. The Holy Father in adoration. 5. SP gathered at the Canadian Embassy. 6. Applause to Sister Therese for the work done. 7. Image of Emilie Gamelin at the Glory of Bernini.