

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN FRENCH NEWFOUNDLAND TO 1714

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**Religious Life in French Newfoundland to 1714.**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

**This thesis examines the religious life of the French colony of Plaisance (Placentia) in Newfoundland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The secular clergy who served the colony during its early years were replaced in 1689 by a group of friars from the Franciscan Récollet province of Saint-Denis (Paris). The Récollets of Saint-Denis were, in turn, replaced by Récollets from Brittany in 1701. Both groups of friars engaged in missionary work in Plaisance and the surrounding areas and often found themselves dealing with problems such as conflict with the secular authorities of the colony, a lack of religious participation by the inhabitants, insufficient or inconsistent funding, an inability to control religious passing through Plaisance aboard ships, and problems of recruitment within their own ranks.**

**The religious history of French Newfoundland is examined using a multiplicity of approaches including a study of the documentary evidence surrounding the tangible forms of religious life in Plaisance, a demographic examination of the population background in Plaisance, and an examination of the religious history surrounding the French colonies. Further, the economic and social realities of a populace with close ties to the fishery and the impact of life in a military establishment impinged upon the religious and spiritual life in the communities.**

The first portion of this thesis deals with life prior to 1689, and includes a study of the migratory religious systems of the colony. Links between the fishery and the religious community are established, as are such factors as Protestantism in the North American colonies, connections between religious life and economic means, religious life elsewhere in New France, and the roles of the governors in establishing the religious atmosphere in Plaisance.

The third through to the fifth chapters examine the establishment and development of the Récollet mission from 1689 to 1701, a significant evolution in the history of the community. The introduction of the Récollets from St.-Denis shifted the social mechanisms within the colony. In attempting to understand the vagaries of the roles played by the monks in Plaisance, an understanding of the nature of the Gallican Church from whence these monks emerged is necessary, as is a study of the political and military events which enveloped their daily lives.

The shift of jurisdiction to the Récollets of Brittany in 1701 is discussed in chapter six, with emphasis on dynamics between the two provinces of Franciscans and the distinctive ways in which the respective groups of friars made their niches. The Récollets from Brittany appear to have had a more numerous presence in the community and seem to have been of a similar social background to the inhabitants of Plaisance.

This history of religion in French Newfoundland ends with the movement of the community of Plaisance to Ile Royale (Cape Breton) in 1714. The Récollets of Brittany were instrumental in assisting the secular authorities and the

colonists with both the journey and the reestablishment of the colony in what was later to be known as Louisbourg. An understanding of the religious life of the French during their formative years in Newfoundland yields a more fruitful insight into the religious histories of Newfoundland, Ile Royale and New France.



*For Mom and Dad, who started me on this road  
and for John, with whom I follow it.*

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so that I might have access to some very interesting material. Martin Lentier of the National Archives of Canada helped me to see some particularly helpful and relevant material on rather short notice. At the Archives des Franciscains à Montréal, Marc Barrett and Père René Bacon provided a wealth of archival and printed material, expressed keen interest in this project, availed me of the courtesy of their convent, and provided coffee and pleasant company in proportions conducive to success. Many of the documents found in the PAC and AN were first encountered through the painstakingly thorough work of the Franciscan Archives, a beautifully maintained collection help by the Franciscans in Montreal. These archives made my job much easier in that they often provided transcriptions of sources which I was then able to compare and verify in the microfilms of AN material held in the PAC. The trip to these archives was funded and encouraged by the Smallwood Centre for Newfoundland Studies, the research grant from which made this thesis an entirely different (and much longer) entity than it might otherwise have been.

Finally, but not least importantly, thanks are due to my husband John, whose sympathy, shoulder rubs, constant friendship and ability to drag me away from the computer screen for long walks completed this thesis as much as any effort on my part did. Academics who marry good editors and friends should realize their wealth more often. Fergusson and Wikket, canine companions and constant presences in the study where much of this thesis was written, provided moments of levity when greatly needed and gave life a sense of proportion on a

daily basis. Without my parents, who told me not to go into English Literature, constantly express an interest in my studies, provided financial and emotional assistance and encourage vacations regularly, this thesis would never have been written.

Within this work, many French sources dating to the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries have been transcribed from microfilm reproductions of the original documents found in the various archival *fonds* used during the course of research. In providing transcriptions of these sources, it is hoped that other scholars will be better able to criticise, analyse and correct the work attempted in these pages. Further, a more readily available pool of sources can only increase scholarly interest in a field.

More specifically of interest to those using these transcriptions for further work is information regarding their contents. Spelling has been maintained as found in the original documents, although the usage of the upright “s” has been eliminated and the inconsistent usage of “j” and “i” has been modified. Capital letters appear in the transcription as in the original.

Finally, all transcriptions and the usage thereof, are to the fault or credit of the author and should in no way reflect on any other person associated with the production of this thesis.

### Abbreviations

<b>AAQ</b>	<b>Archives de l'archidiocèse de Québec</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>Archives départementales de Seine-Maritime</b>
<b>AF</b>	<b>Archives des Franciscains de Québec, province de St. Joseph</b>
<b>AN</b>	<b>Archives nationales, France</b>
<b>AN, Colonies</b>	<b>Archives nationales, France. Archives des Colonies</b>
<b>AN, Marine</b>	<b>Archives nationales, France. Archives de la Marine</b>
<b>ASQ</b>	<b>Archives du séminaire de Québec</b>
<b>BN</b>	<b>Bibliothèque nationale (Paris)</b>
<b>CF</b>	<b><i>Canada Français</i></b>
<b>DCB</b>	<b><i>Dictionary of Canadian Biography</i></b>
<b><i>Documents relatifs</i></b>	<b><i>Collection de Manuscrits contenant Lettres, Mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à l'histoire de la Nouvelle-France: Recueilles aux archives de la province de Québec, ou copiés étranger</i></b>
<b><i>Mortuologe</i></b>	<b><i>Mortuologe des Récollets (ASQ, Mss, 200)</i></b>
<b><i>MSRC</i></b>	<b><i>Mémoires de la Société royale du Canada</i></b>
<b><i>Nécrologe</i></b>	<b><i>Nécrologe des Frères Mineurs Récollets de la province de St. - Denys (BN, Fonds français, 13875)</i></b>
<b><i>REHF</i></b>	<b><i>Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise de France</i></b>



## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

In the sanitised world of documentary sources, where Plaisance resembles a quaint outpost in New France and the problems between cleric and governor seem amusing anecdotes, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine the smelly, primitive, and isolated conditions of the colony. Despite its name, the French capital was probably not a pleasant place in which to live. The leaders were often corrupt, supplies were unreliable and the merchants bled the inhabitants for as much as could be taken from a living being. As Plaisance served as both a military garrison and a base for the French fishery, the majority of its inhabitants were male and served as either fishermen or soldiers. The few women in the colony were generally the wives or daughters of several of the well-established families and often the daughters were married to members of other families of a similar social and economic stratum. Many of the migratory inhabitants were labourers hired to serve on the boats, and were generally heavily in debt to the merchants of the colony. The military garrison also had a steady turnover, with new men being shuffled into the colony regularly to replace those who had been reassigned, either to another post or to a grave. One did not stay in Plaisance for long, if one could help it.

The steady supply of clergy to the island indicates their concurrence with the fishermen and soldiers, with most priests staying for two or three years and then returning to France, if still alive. The simple matter of uncertain supplies

was motivation enough for many to leave or travel frequently back to France, although that journey was fraught with perils as well. To further complicate religious matters, those who made it to Plaisance were faced with a group of men, many of whom were temporary residents, whose primary foci were money, fish and fighting. Religion was an obligation and a part of life, to be sure, but many were struggling to put bread in their own mouths, let alone those of their priests or *cures*.

In 1689, after almost thirty years of a migratory clerical system, Franciscan Récollets were established in Plaisance and the French capital of Newfoundland was given official parish status. From that point onwards, Plaisance was served by these Récollets, who were initially from the Franciscan Province of Saint-Denis (Paris) and later from that of Brittany. These friars interacted with the citizens and were involved with many aspects of the colonists' lives, including religious guidance, economics or trade, and political negotiations.<sup>1</sup> The first group of Récollet friars, from the Province of Saint-Denis, established the Plaisance hospice in 1689 and stayed until 1700, when both conflict within the colony and the pressing need of the French military for chaplains forced them to retract their missionaries and leave the mission. Friars from the Franciscan Province of Brittany filled the remaining years, from 1701 to

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of avoiding confusion between the two words "Plaisance" and "Placentia", the former will be used to refer to the French capital, while the latter will be reserved for the extant English community in that location after 1714.

1715, when, due to the ordinances of the Treaty of Utrecht, the majority of the Plaisance community moved to Ile Royale.

This thesis attempts to examine the community of Plaisance from the perspective of its religious ecclesiastical dimensions and will undertake to study the way in which church organisation and religious practice varied. A multiplicity of approaches is necessary in order to reveal the fullest interpretation of the history of religious life in Plaisance. These means of understanding include a study of the documentary evidence surrounding the tangible forms of religious life in Plaisance, an examination of the religious history surrounding the French colonies, and a demographic examination of the population background in Plaisance. Further, the economic and social realities of a populace with close ties to the fishery and the impact of life in a military establishment impinged upon the religious and spiritual life in the communities.

The portion of the thesis which deals with the 1689 establishment of the hospice in Plaisance and the reconstruction of the religious milieu immediately prior to this change sets the stage for an understanding of the roles of the Récollets in Plaisance. This section examines the places of Protestantism and Catholicism in the Plaisance community and provides a backdrop against which to understand the reasons for the introduction of the Récollets. In order to achieve this end, this portion of the thesis reconstructs the historical framework from available primary sources and examines the community in terms of its place in the spiritual and theological framework of French thought of the period

as well as contextualising the religious position of Plaisance within the colony of New France.

The establishment of the Récollet mission in 1689 was a significant event in the general, as well as religious, history of the community. The introduction of the Récollets from St.-Denis undoubtedly shifted the social mechanisms within the colony. Letters written between governor and ministers as well as those between the religious themselves and their Bishop in Quebec paint a colourful picture of the public and official reaction on the part of the community to the introduction of the Parisian monks. In attempting to understand the vagaries of the roles played by the monks in Plaisance, an understanding of the nature of the Gallican Church whence these monks emerged is necessary, as is a study of the political and military events which enveloped their daily lives.

The shift of jurisdiction to the Récollets of Brittany in 1701 is intriguing, not only from the perspective of the tension between two monastic communities, but for the distinctive ways in which the respective communities made their niches. There are primary sources which suggest that while the Récollets of Paris were in Plaisance first, they were never truly accepted in quite the same way as were their successors. The Récollets from Brittany appear to have had a more numerous presence in the community and seem to have been of a similar social background to the inhabitants of Plaisance.

The Newfoundland French communities stand out dramatically from the rest of Acadia by their population breakdown and their economic activities.



There were no *coureurs du bois*, nor was farming a viable economic endeavour. The fishery dominated the community to such an extent that even those having occupations other than fisherman or merchant found themselves fishing full-time as a means of financial support, even to the point of abandoning their true professions.<sup>2</sup> The nature of the population of Plaisance as well as the economic activities in which the colonists engaged bear directly on the social and religious life of the colony. Census data indicate that the majority of the population came from the north-west of France, namely Brittany and Poitou, and that there was also a significant Basque population.<sup>3</sup> The connection of spirituality and local geography has also been ignored, as have the distinctive natures of the cultural groups within the French community. The proximity of the sea and the dependence on the fishery coupled with the traditionally strong ties of Bretons with religion and the ocean have yet to be addressed.<sup>4</sup>

The distinctive nature of the Breton language and culture undoubtedly changed the way in which the populace associated with the official church. This coupled with the general spirit of religious reform as exemplified by Breton

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<sup>2</sup>John Humphreys, *Plaisance; problems of settlement at this Newfoundland outpost of New France 1660-1690*, Publications in history, no. 3 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1970), 8.

<sup>3</sup> This data taken from the census of 1698, AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>4</sup> Martin, "Les Franciscains bretons," 641.

clergy of the period implies a distinctive interaction between clergy and laity.<sup>5</sup> Examining the population information gleaned from the censuses of the period, it is possible to see the population data as to where the inhabitants came from, whom they married and where these marriages took place. It is also possible to see the intimate connection of the inhabitants with the fishery, a similarity shared with the Récollets of Brittany.<sup>6</sup> This section of the thesis attempts to understand the way in which the linguistic and cultural differences between the Récollets of Paris and those of Brittany may have led to a variance in the successes of the two establishments.

The most remarkable feature of available scholarship pertaining to the study of the Récollet Franciscans in Plaisance is its fragmentary nature. There are studies which examine the military history of the French colony and mention religion in passing,<sup>7</sup> those undertaking an analysis of the economic significance of Plaisance with sporadic mention of the conflict between the Huguenots and

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<sup>5</sup> Alain Croix, *La Bretagne aux 16e et 17e siècles. La vie, la mort, la foi* (Paris: Maloine, 1981), 1215.

<sup>6</sup> Hervé Martin, "Les Franciscains bretons et les gens de mer: De Bretagne en Acadie (Xve-XVIIIe siècle)," *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 87, no. 4 (December, 1980): 643.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Pierre Proulx, *Histoire militaire de Plaisance : une étude sur les fortifications françaises ; Plaisance : 1713-1811* (Ottawa : Direction des lieux et des parcs historiques nationaux, Parcs Canada, 1979).

Catholics<sup>8</sup> or Basques and other colonists<sup>9</sup> and even a few in which portions of the religious milieu are examined,<sup>10</sup> but as of yet there are no works which deal comprehensively with the role of religion in French Newfoundland. Among the group addressing aspects of religion in Plaisance are several works which give sections of the historical involvement of the Récollets with the French capital. At present, however, there are no inclusive studies of the Récollets in Plaisance and relatively little analysis of the place of religion in French Newfoundland.

The place of organised Roman Catholic religion in the colonial efforts of France during the time of Louis XIV is best expressed by Cornelius Jaenen in his succinctly-titled work, *The Role of the Church in New France*.<sup>11</sup> This work explores the nature of religion in New France in light of the Gallican Church, which was by definition intimately connected with French political and economic values of the period. The Church in New France worked hand-in-hand

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<sup>8</sup> Frances Blandford Briffett, "A History of the French in Newfoundland Previous to 1714." (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Queen's University, 1927).

<sup>9</sup> Robert Le Blant, "Une sédition basque a Terre-Neuve en 1690; pièces justificatives," *Revue historique et archéologique du Béarn et du pays basque*, 2, no. 15 (Janvier-fevrier, 1932): 46-64.

<sup>10</sup> Hugolin Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis à Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve* (Quebec, s.n., 1911) and M.F. Howley, *Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland*. (Boston: Doyle and Whittle, 1888), 141-162.

<sup>11</sup> Cornelius J. Jaenen, *The Role of the Church in New France*, Frontenac Library, Althouse College of Education, University of Western Ontario, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976).

with the secular authority of the state to ensure social order in New World communities. The French Catholic Church traditionally held strong ties with the state, ties that date back to the first Capetian kings. During the colonial period of New France, this set of links was transposed into the New World and set the framework for the interactions between governors and clerics.<sup>12</sup> The influence of such connections extended beyond mere political or economic ties as they also involved the social mores of the habitants in the French colonial outposts. The influence of both institutional religion and popular spirituality on the citizens of New France was a significant factor of society, for it had the double impact of missionary endeavour coupled with the weight of the French institutionalised Church of the Old World.<sup>13</sup> The structure of church organisation as well as the basic nature of interaction between clergy and citizens was essentially the same. From the state perspective the church reinforced the values of respect for the monarchy, structural integrity of social hierarchy, and adhesion to moral principles that maintained social order.

Jaenen mentions Plaisance only twice and briefly at that, although his work serves to provide an excellent context in which to understand the interactions of Church and state. \*\* Further, he outlines the various taxes and sources of revenues accorded the religious orders in New France, including the

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<sup>12</sup> W. J. Eccles, "The Role of the Church in New France," in W. J. Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987), 26.

<sup>13</sup> Jaenen, *Role of the Church*, 39.

distinction of tithes that varied according to economic resources available.<sup>14</sup> This information is integral to an understanding of the Récollet involvement with the fishery and hence the fishing community, in Plaisance.

In 1882, M. F. Howley published the first edition of his history of religion in Newfoundland, of which one chapter addressed religious life in the French colonies of Newfoundland prior to 1713 and two examine the religious life in New France in the surrounding time periods.<sup>15</sup> Howley was the first to publish on the subject of the Récollet missionaries in Plaisance. His history included a summary of the founding of the church in Quebec and a thorough description of the roles played by Bishops Laval and Saint-Vallier. His examination of the religious life in Plaisance began with Saint-Vallier's visit and decision in 1689 to establish a Récollet convent in the community. Saint-Vallier's letter to the convent in Quebec requesting Franciscans to come to Newfoundland is printed in translation in Howley's book.<sup>16</sup> Howley noted certain important details which can be gleaned from this letter, such as the pre-existence of a church structure in the community. He was also the first to indicate a Basque presence in the

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>15</sup> Howley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 141-162

<sup>16</sup> Howley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 141-142.

community prior to French settlement.<sup>17</sup> The 1692 mandate of Louis XIV in which the Récollets are granted royal sanction for their mission is also printed in translation, as are sections of the journals of Father Baudoin, the cleric who accompanied d'Iberville in his military excursions.<sup>18</sup>

It is understandable that the first secondary source in the area of French Catholicism in Newfoundland should be written by a Catholic Archbishop. Howley's promotion of the study of religion in Newfoundland did much to demonstrate the wealth of available material as well as the gulfs in scholarship to that point. His work on Plaisance is sketchy and relies on lecture notes from the influential Newfoundland ecclesiastic Bishop Mullock,<sup>19</sup> using relatively few of the primary sources that provide the bulk of current scholarly knowledge on the area.<sup>20</sup> As a secondary source of information regarding Plaisance, Howley's work

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<sup>17</sup> M. F. Howley, "The Old Basque Tombstones at Placentia," *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, section 2, vol. 8 (1902): 79-92.

<sup>18</sup> Howley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 146, 150-158

<sup>19</sup> Bishop Mullock was a Seraphim priest in the mid-nineteenth century with a keen interest in Newfoundland history. In a later portion of his book (pp. 294-295), Howley demonstrates his great admiration for Mullock as a churchman.

<sup>20</sup> During the nineteenth century, such sources were much more difficult to obtain than they are now, as interlibrary lending and microfilm were not options with which scholars were faced. Many of the most important sources were located in the National Archives of France as well as in many subsidiary departmental archives in the various areas of France. The National Archives of Canada had not yet catalogued and made easily available copies of certain relevant documents. Scholars were obliged to travel to France to view these sources and even then, finding them was a trick few could master completely without a lifetime's work. Archival finding aids are fairly recent developments

is not particularly significant. As a publication which demonstrates the beginnings of the area of study, underlines the first primary sources which came to light, and underscores the need for further academic research, the book gains strength and value in the eyes of the contemporary reader.

Moving ahead thirty years sees the beginning of a new group of scholars for whom the study of the missionary works of the Récollet Franciscans had personal significance. Hugolin Lemay and Odoric Jouve wrote in the beginning of the twentieth century and opened a completely new set of materials from which to glean information regarding religion and New France. Both members of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor and both having access to French archival sources in vast quantities, Lemay and Jouve laid the foundations on which all contemporary scholarship of the Franciscans in New France is built. While Lemay's works were published from roughly 1912 to 1940, Jouve's researches remained buried for some fifty years, only to be published recently.<sup>21</sup>

The writings of Hugolin Lemay in the early 1900s brought an increased awareness among churchmen and scholars of the variety and wealth of

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and even with these forms of assistance, the French archives are a veritable labyrinth.

<sup>21</sup> The dossiers compiled by Jouve were recently published in Odoric-Marie Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique des récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France, 1615-1645, 1670-1849*. Odoric Jouve with the collaboration of Archange Godbout Hervé Blais et René Bacon. (Montreal, Quebec : Bellarmin, c 1996.), and are still available for perusal through the Archives des Franciscains in Montréal.

information available with regards to the Récollets and their Acadian missions. Specific to Plaisance is one work entitled *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, which covers in great detail the events leading up to the arrival of the Récollets of St. Denis in 1689 and the integration of these friars into the community of Plaisance.<sup>22</sup> A further article of use in the area is his *Table nominale des Récollets de Bretagne en Ile Royale*, in which a short section lists some of the Récollets from Brittany who served the Plaisance community.<sup>23</sup>

Lemay's work on the Récollets in Plaisance is the source most often cited by scholars, it being the only published and documented source dealing specifically with the Récollets of St. Denis and their mission to the Newfoundland French community. While Father Hugolin's work is certainly more thorough and detailed than its predecessor, it has certain limitations that have not yet been overcome by contemporary scholarship. Firstly, Lemay himself was a Récollet monk concerned primarily with describing and praising the missionary works of the Récollets in Acadia and in so doing misses the weight of certain criticisms and problems mentioned in primary documents. He makes no mention of the problems of the settlers with the quality of service received from the Parisian Récollets and sides with the friars in describing their disputes with the governors.

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<sup>22</sup> Hugolin Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets...à Plaisance..*

<sup>23</sup> Hugolin Lemay, "Table nominale des Récollets de Bretagne, missionnaires et aumôniers dans l'Ile Royale (1713-1759)," *MSRC*, Section 1, (1931): 81-100. The section dealing specifically with the Récollets in Plaisance is in pages 99-100.



A further difficulty found more with the period of scholarship than with Lemay is a sporadic lack of documentation.

A more significant problem of Lemay's work with regards to its pertinence to Plaisance is its incompleteness. In his account of the establishment of the Récollets of St.-Denis in Plaisance, he deals substantially with the Récollets of St.-Denis. There was, however, another group of Récollets who had a substantial impact on the community of Plaisance, namely those from St.-Pierre in Brittany. While the Récollets of St.-Denis established the mission in Plaisance, there is much to indicate that they essentially abandoned it within five years. In 1701, the Récollets of Brittany took over the post and over the course of the next thirteen years sent six or more monks to Plaisance to maintain the convent and duties of the parish. Their presence was virtually continuous from the time they arrived until long after the move of the community to Ile Royale. Lemay's work mentions the change of hands from Saint-Denis to Brittany, but does not elaborate upon the Breton friars' involvement in Plaisance.

This gap has not yet been comprehensively addressed by academics, although some inroads have been made in a patchwork fashion by the works of Archange Godbout, René Bacon, Marion Habig and Blais Hervé in their recent posthumous publication of the researches of Odoric Jouve.<sup>24</sup> Once again, the chief researcher, writers and editors of this publication are religious of the

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<sup>24</sup> Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*.

Franciscan orders and as such have a personal interest in the course of current scholarship of the Franciscan order. An admirably balanced and well-documented work, their *Dictionnaire biographique des Récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle France*, describes the individual monks and lay brothers in New France. It delineates who is known to have been in Plaisance, dates for these Récollets where known, and events surrounding the individuals in question. The primary sources of this work are the document collections now housed in the Archives Nationales in France and the Public Archives in Ottawa,<sup>25</sup> although the Archives de l'Archévêché and the Archives du Séminaire de Québec also figure prominently.

The chief value of this work lies in its organisation and thoroughness. Thus far it is the only published source dealing in any detail with the individual Récollets from Brittany and their time in Plaisance. It enumerates the Récollet missionaries in New France and draws connections between monks who were in contact with other members of the order. It is also relatively contemporary and makes use of a wide range of primary sources available to draw a clear picture of the individual Récollets' works in New France.

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<sup>25</sup>Many of the documents found in the Archives Nationales, Paris which were related to New France were microfilmed and transmitted to the Public Archives of Canada. As such, availability of primary sources for North American scholars is greatly facilitated and the sources available in France are mirrored in Canada..

There are certain caveats that apply to this work due to its format and sources. Firstly, the very nature of the book as a dictionary means that the individual entries are not placed in a chronological or geographical context. Finding continuity between entries is left to the reader. As a dictionary it succeeds well, but as a text on the history of the Franciscan order in New France, it lacks cohesiveness. As it relates directly to the study of the Récollets in Plaisance, it is at once useful and misleading. The entries on the Récollets of St.-Denis are heavily dependent on the work of Lemay and the dossiers of primary material compiled by him and his contemporary, Jouve. In fact, they often do not go beyond the researches of these two scholars. In no area does this show so clearly as the entries dealing with the Récollets of St.-Pierre, Brittany. While the entries for the Récollets of St.-Denis are long and detailed, those of the Récollets from Brittany (about whom Lemay wrote very little) are extremely short and lack information regarding the actions of these friars in Plaisance. As a whole, however, this is one of the most useful secondary writings due to its abundance of citations and its inclusion of the Récollets of Brittany in the religious history of French Placentia.

The next substantial collective work which deals with Plaisance and incorporates religious life is the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.<sup>26</sup> The *DCB* entries of volumes one and two cover most of the significant political and religious figures in the history of Plaisance, giving biographical details as well as

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<sup>26</sup> David M. Mayne, ed., *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Volumes I and II, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969).

identifying sources from which further information can be gleaned. As with any large compilation of articles, the value of the individual pieces can vary significantly, both in terms of focus and quality. The majority of the articles related to Plaisance are concerned with the military and political situation, although biographical sketches of several ecclesiastics and Récollets are included. The primary use of these entries is the depiction of the personalities within the colony as well as the sketching of the important interactions between various political and religious characters present in Plaisance. The limitations of this work are distinctly obvious; it is a reference work denoting the biographical details of significant personalities in Canadian history. As such, it does not cover some of the less well-known historic figures in Canada. Those it does cover are sketched out in personality and interactions, but often their influences are not sufficiently explained. As could be expected from a dictionary, this source is long on information and sources, but short on analysis and context.

The exact opposite is true of the work of Raymond Lahey on religious life in Placentia.<sup>27</sup> Presented as a lecture to the Placentia Area Historical Society, Lahey's paper has no citations, but yields a wealth of information pertaining to the church life of the French in Plaisance. Aloysius Leonard's unpublished

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<sup>27</sup> Raymond J. Lahey, "Church Affairs during the French Settlement at Placentia (1662-1714)." (St. John's, Department of Religious Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1972).

documentary history is an attempt to supply the sources used by Lahey.<sup>28</sup> The combination of the two yields a work in which the religious history of Plaisance is placed clearly in the context of Newfoundland religiosity of the time as well as in light of the military and economic history of the community.

The basic problem with the works of the *DCB*, Lahey, Leonard and to a certain extent Jouve, Bacon, Habig and Hervé is their reliance on the primary sources used by Lemay and the repeated use of the information provided there without uncovering and incorporating other available primary documents. A second deficiency in the available literature is the failure to contextualise the religious life of the community within the broader schema of French spirituality and religiosity of the time.

The publication by A. John Johnson on the religious life of the community of Fort Louisbourg.<sup>29</sup> provides an excellent continuation of the religious history of the community of Plaisance. The Plaisance community forms the nucleus of the group studied by Johnson, as the Newfoundland French settlers moved to Ile Royale in 1714 after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht. While Johnson's study begins where Plaisance ends, he examines aspects of life prior to the move and provides an understanding of the continuity of the community. Certain features

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<sup>28</sup> Aloysius Leonard, "A Documentary History of Roman Catholicism at Plaisance." (Unpublished Manuscript submitted to the Department of Religious Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1985).

<sup>29</sup> A.J.B. Johnston, *Religion in Life at Louisbourg 1713-1758*, (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984).

of life and personalities in Louisbourg were also present in Plaisance, so that it is reasonable to examine the early years of Louisbourg for information regarding the nature of Plaisance's religious life. Issues such as the importance of the Récollets in the move to Louisbourg and the re-establishment of the colony indicate the significance of the Franciscans to social and spiritual order. Primary documents about the Louisbourg settlement are more prolific than those from Plaisance, likely due to the later date and greater economic and military importance of Ile Royale, making the reconstruction and understanding of the social and religious history of Louisbourg somewhat easier. Facets of Louisbourg religious life that extend back into the life of Plaisance incorporate the community of Récollets from Brittany, including some individuals who served the community in both locations. Also, rituals formed in Plaisance reflected ties with the fishery and were maintained in Louisbourg. Pastour de Costebelle, brother of the financial representative of the Récollets in Plaisance, was governor of the colony before and after the move and played a significant role in the dispute between the Récollets of Paris and those of Brittany during the years 1714-1718. De Costebelle's opinions of the two communities was formed in Plaisance and significantly contributed to the outcome of the conflict.

The involvement of the Récollets with the people of Plaisance between the years 1689 and 1714 remains an aspect of the fragmentary history of religious life in a distinctive economic and social community in New France. While the

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basic history of the establishment of the Saint-Denis, Paris community has been told, the situation surrounding the brothers of St.-Pierre, Brittany has been left largely untouched. Further, each writer has given a piecemeal account of spiritual life in the community, often lifting the religious life completely out of the cultural, political and economic milieu of the period. This study examines both communities of Récollets, their roles and interactions within the community, and the way in which they shaped the spiritual life of the community in light of the religious climate of the period.

The synthesis of this work is both portrait and understanding, as it attempts to draw together disparate sources from which a picture of Plaisance's religious life and to interpret that phenomenon in light of the religious climate of the period. It is hoped that such a study will prove the beginning of more in-depth examinations by other scholars into the fascinating social life of Plaisance and will in some small way contribute to a greater understanding of the formation of the French communities currently in Newfoundland, the settlement of Louisbourg which was born of Plaisance, and the history and background of Newfoundland during a period often examined only for its military significance. Further, such cases as Plaisance, which do not fit the traditional mould of New France due to their population and resource bases, broaden knowledge about the French in the New World and open possibilities hitherto unforeseen.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Religion in Plaisance 1628-1689**

#### **2.1 The Cultural Diversity of Plaisance**

Seventeenth-century French religious life did not exist only by virtue of official Church policy. The beliefs and practices of the general population were often a mixture of Church doctrine and traditional practices. The personal devotion of the fishermen and merchants existed regardless of the priests sent by the crown, although the presence of clergy undoubtedly gave shape to the religious activity of the population. Religious life in Plaisance likely began with the first arrival of Europeans, whether or not they were accompanied by clerics, as religion figured prominently in the lives of most Europeans during the early modern period. Obvious signs of spiritual concerns emerged prior to the French colonial efforts of 1662, and the Roman Catholic faith was well-established long before the arrival of the Récollets in 1689. Also firmly entrenched were the practices and beliefs of certain Protestant settlers, some English, some French, who had made the journey to the New World in search of both financial gain and religious freedom. Along with the English and the French were the Basques, Roman Catholic by faith, but with a different language and a variant set of traditions. This ensemble of religious persuasions was the basis upon which the French crown was to establish a Roman Catholic colony.

The Basque fishermen hailed from the Biscay region, which straddles the border of France and Spain. Earliest documentary evidence finds their presence



in Newfoundland during the 1540s, as recorded in Spanish wills and lawsuits in which Basques are mentioned.<sup>30</sup> While they were renowned primarily for their whaling ventures in the *Provincia de Terranova*, their term for Labrador, the Basques also took advantage of the cod fishery on the *Ile de Baccaillau*, or Newfoundland.<sup>31</sup> They held six to ten whaling stations along the Labrador coast, including Port-aux-Basques, Codroy Island, Port au Choix, Red Bay and Chateau Bay.<sup>32</sup> Most stayed from July to the end of January, although due to their participation in the dry fishery, many Basques wintered over in order to take advantage of an early start the following year.<sup>33</sup> The Basque cod fishing capitals were *Cunilas* and *Petit Plaisance*.<sup>34</sup> There was a dramatic drop in the numbers of

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<sup>30</sup> Selma Barkham, "The Documentary Evidence for Basque Whaling Ships in the Strait of Belle Isle," in George M. Story, ed, *Early European Settlement and Exploitation in Atlantic Canada*, (St. John's, NF: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982) 53-96; Selma H. Barkham, *The Basque Coast of Newfoundland* (Nfld: Great Northern Development Corporation, 1989); Selma H. Barkham, "Aperçu de l'évolution de la pêche sur les côtes de l'est canadien," Extracted from *Congrès national des sociétés historiques et scientifiques*, (Pau, France, s.n., 1993)

<sup>31</sup> Baccaillau literally means "cod", thus Ile de Baccallieu means "Island of Cod".

<sup>32</sup> Barkham, *The Basque Coast*, 6, 7, 15, 18.

<sup>33</sup> The Basques, among other nations, participated in the dry cod fishery. This method of fishing required large expanses of beach or carefully constructed flakes upon which to dry fish. The drying process also required more time, although it depended less on the availability of vast quantities of salt. Keith Matthews, *Lectures on the History of Newfoundland: 1500-1830*, Newfoundland History Series 4 (St., John's, NF: Breakwater Books, 1988), 50; Barkham, *The Basque Coast*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Cunillas was the Basque name for Plaisance, while Petit Plaisance was their term for modern-day Argentina.

Basque fishermen during the 1580s, when Phillip II of Spain commandeered many men for his Armada, but the Basque presence in the Newfoundland fishery continued, albeit on a much smaller scale.<sup>35</sup> Plaisance was perfectly suited to their fishery, having expansive beaches and early cod migration. Even after the French officially settled in the area, the Basques continued to fish nearby and frequently availed themselves of the resources of Plaisance.<sup>36</sup> There appears to have been a certain solidarity among the members of Roman Catholic nations in Plaisance as evidenced by their willingness to share such resources as portions of beachfront and the cemetery.

The religious life of the Basques in Plaisance is scantily documented, although certain features can be extrapolated from a broader knowledge of their culture. There is a record of the Basques carrying priests on their ships to attend to their religious needs.<sup>37</sup> Officially a Roman Catholic nation, Spanish fishermen would have found themselves in need of many of the same religious services as the French. Even when an established priest was in Plaisance, however, the Basques likely continued to maintain their own religious for the simple reason of language; the Basque dialect or language was quite different from that of the fishermen from Brittany or Normandy.

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<sup>35</sup> Matthews, *Lectures*, 52.

<sup>36</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Johnston, *Religion and Life*, 47.

Apart from the mention of priests in the Basque community of Plaisance, there exists a more tangible sign of religious life among the Basques, namely their tombstones. In fact, the Basque tombstones are the most significant remaining physical sign of religious life in the community prior to 1763. The tombstones on which dates are inscribed fall between the years 1676 and 1694 and the inscriptions have been preserved in print.<sup>38</sup> These tombstones were in the community graveyard which was shared by all Roman Catholics, be they Basque, French and English. That they date to the period after the official colonisation of Plaisance by the French indicates some level of religious interaction between French and Basque, even if the association was a silent acquiescence.

It is possible, although unlikely, that the Basques were buried by a French priest. The funeral rites could have been conducted by an available Roman Catholic priest, regardless of his nationality. This possibility does not account for the existence of the tombstones, which were inscribed in a combination of Basque and Latin, leading to the assumption that at least one person in the Basque community could read and write. Given the overall dearth of literates among fishermen of the period, it is likely that such a chore would fall first to a Basque ecclesiastic, although literate laypeople were known to have carved tombstones and perform funeral rituals. A priest's command of Latin would have ostensibly been sufficient to provide the proper wording for a tombstone. More

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<sup>38</sup> Howley, "The Old Basque Tombstones," 80 – 86, and Howley, *Ecclesiastical History*, 145.

importantly, the presence of a priest fluent in Basque would have consolidated the Basque community and communicated clearly basic issues to the bereaved.

Along with the Basques and their religious traditions, the English lived among the French in Plaisance, as evidenced by their appearances in the various censuses taken during Plaisance's history. The French census data of 1671 show three Englishmen in the community, namely Thom Pic, Philippe Zemard, and Louis de Beaufet.<sup>39</sup> From the census information in 1694 and 1698, they appear to have been among the most prosperous men in the community, but further than a few economic and marital details, little is known about their personal lives.<sup>40</sup> Their religious beliefs and practices are not recorded and there is no way of knowing if they were among those unrecanting Protestants referred to by Governor Parat.<sup>41</sup>

Protestantism was viewed as a disease often transmitted by the English and any connection between settlers in French colonies and the English was discouraged for fear of treason. A composite dualism existed in the eyes of the

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<sup>39</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 1. Rolle des gens de l'habitation de Plaisance, 1671.

<sup>40</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10. Recensement de toute la collonie establee en liste de Terre neuve et Saint Pierre, le Grand Plaisance et la premiere coullonne, l'isle de Terre Neuve pour l'année 1694, and AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>41</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1 (Québec: Imprimerie A. Côté, 1883), 381.

colonial leaders, with English and Protestant existing on one side and French and Catholic on the other. Allowing Protestants to interact with the Catholics was frowned upon, as it was believed that the French would betray secrets of military strategy and defence to the English. The danger of connections between the French and English was made obvious in the 1690s, when certain English who were allowed into the town by the governor were said to have obtained information that allowed for a successful attack on the town.<sup>42</sup>

## **2.2 Migratory Fishery to Settlement**

The early Plaisance community was largely seasonal, reflecting the tendency of fishermen to travel to Newfoundland for the fishing season and return home to sell their catches and replenish their supplies.<sup>43</sup> During these early years, the religious in Plaisance were likely seasonal as well, having been brought from France, England, or Spain by fishing crews. There was little need for an established priest in the area, and it was certainly not practical. Supporting a priest living year-round in Plaisance for the sake of a few permanent inhabitants was an unjustifiable expense. Prior to Martin Hurte,

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<sup>42</sup> According to de Costebelle, the English admitted to tour the colony were spies. The English attackers substantiated this claim by referring to Parat as a traitor to his country, implying that his indiscretion had given the raiders a tactical edge. AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 301; Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 15-16.

<sup>43</sup> Harold A Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1978), 47-49.

mentioned in the census of 1671, there is no evidence of a permanent resident priest. Until official settlement in the mid-seventeenth century, Plaisance's religious were as migratory as the people to whom they ministered, travelling annually back and forth across the Atlantic.

### 2.2.1 Clergy on Ships

While religious practice and life cannot be measured solely by the presence of professional religious, the potential for certain activities is greatly reduced by their absence. Roman Catholic fishermen on the *terreneuviers*<sup>44</sup> were unable to engage in often-needed rites such as extreme unction, confession, or communion without the presence of a Catholic priest. Given the perilous nature of life on a fishing vessel during that period, such rites would have been necessary with disconcerting regularity. Death lurked on every whitecap, and vessels often lost a third or more of their crews on arduous journeys.<sup>45</sup> Life-cycle rituals aside, the presence of a priest was designed to improve the standard of moral life aboard the ships. In 1681, France passed an ordinance stating that

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<sup>44</sup> The French term for fishing vessels which sailed from France to exploit the Newfoundland fishery.

<sup>45</sup> Marie-Christine Varachaud, "La formation des aumôniers de la Marine du Roi Soleil," *Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise de France*, 80 (1994): 66, citing the second part of the third book of Georges Fournier, *l'Hydrographie, contenant le théorie et la pratique de toutes les parties de la Navigation*, vol.3 (Paris: s.n., 1643) While such figures as Fournier cites did not hold for all cases, they do serve to emphasize the need for an available chaplain.

ships engaged on long voyages were required to have an almoner or chaplain on board.<sup>46</sup> In a letter dated 30 March 1688, M. de Monmort, *Intendant de la Havre Marine*, wrote to M. de Pontchartrain, Secretary of State for the Marine, that this particular law was almost never obeyed due to lack of practicality;<sup>47</sup> finding sufficient priests was impossible and paying them was yet another expense. The law was then modified on 22 June 1694 to include long voyages with more than twenty-five men. Even this law proved to be too demanding and the minimum number of men for whom a religious was required was set at thirty.<sup>48</sup>

Apart from an increased need for chaplains during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were certain other factors limiting the availability of priests for such voyages. Firstly, such journeys were long, arduous affairs with high mortality rates. Crews were often reduced significantly by accident and disease, a factor which may have deterred almoners from choosing a floating parish.<sup>49</sup> Initially, the pay was not substantial and the food was the normal fare aboard a ship, which is to say, unpalatable.

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<sup>46</sup> Varachaud, "La formation," 66.

<sup>47</sup> AN, Series B3, vol. 55, 298.

<sup>48</sup> John McManners, *The Clerical Establishment and its Social Ramifications*, vol. 1 of *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, The Oxford History of the Christian Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 62.

<sup>49</sup> N.E.S. Griffiths, "1600-1650: Fish, Fur, and Folk," in *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History*, eds. Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 48-49.

In an attempt to increase the number of clerics available to both the royal navy and the merchants of France, measures were enacted by the bishops and king to improve the living conditions of the chaplains. Seminaries were established by the crown in Rochefort, Brest and Toulon, with the intention of augmenting the number of priests.<sup>50</sup> These seminaries were notoriously underfunded and did little to alleviate the deficit. Along with this attempt at increased training and education, financial incentives and benefits were offered those willing to assume marine ecclesiastical posts. The chaplains were accorded a raise in salary, with their pay jumping to approximately thirty *livres* a month in 1701. Accompanying this were meals at the captain's own table at which a standard of repast higher than that of the crew was the norm.<sup>51</sup>

In actual fact, these measures may have increased the number of clerics available for maritime travel to some small degree, but it certainly did nothing for the quality of almoner attracted. The promise of a decent meal and reasonable salary under unfavourable living conditions attracted the dregs of religious society. Often the priests were running from the law or some form of ecclesiastical discipline.<sup>52</sup> Despite, or perhaps because of, this they still were able

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<sup>50</sup> McManners, *The Clerical Establishment*, 62. For further information regarding the training and effectiveness of these institutions, see Varachaud, "La formation".

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*



to identify and communicate with the crews, possibly better than would have more wholesome or rigid priests.<sup>53</sup>

It is difficult to know exactly how many priests made their way to Newfoundland from ports such as La Rochelle or St.-Malo during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They came from many orders, including the Lazarists, Capuchins, Récollets, Jesuits and secular clergy.<sup>54</sup> Despite this varied and cosmopolitan pool the supply was never up to the demand; in St.-Malo in 1730, the proportionate number of religious to fishermen was roughly one priest for 185 fishermen and falling.<sup>55</sup>

One such priest is recorded as having spent his summers travelling to Newfoundland and ministering to the crews there. Vatican documents of the Propaganda register the petitions of one de Neufville, a priest from the diocese of Coutances, who travelled to Newfoundland each year to administer the sacraments to the five or six thousand fishermen from Saint-Malo. Neufville was working under the auspices of the Bishop of Saint-Malo, but travelled to Rome to make his request directly to Pope Clement IX. The objects of his petition included a portable altar, the permission to celebrate Mass on proscribed days, the right to absolve reserved cases, permission to accord plenary indulgences in certain cases, and the right to celebrate the requiem Mass once a week. In his petition, he

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<sup>53</sup> McManners, *The Clerical Establishment*, 64.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

also recorded abuses by Spanish, Basque, Italian and French fishermen who worked on Sundays.<sup>56</sup>

This supplication of 1669 was followed up two months later by another letter from de Neufville in which he reiterates his case and departs, unable to afford a longer stay in Rome.<sup>57</sup> It is unknown when or whether he returned again to Newfoundland. A further complication of de Neufville's request is mentioned by Luca Codignola, as he points out that de Neufville had been travelling to Newfoundland with the consent of the Bishop of St.-Malo, whereas he ought to have originally sought permission from the Propaganda Fide.<sup>58</sup>

Apart for the mere indication of the presence of a priest, this document indicates that certain of these priests took their jobs quite seriously and were sufficiently concerned to request religious rights from the Vatican. Apart from the scattered reference such as the one about de Neufville, it is difficult to find sufficient data with which to assess exactly how many priests came to Newfoundland, know whether they stayed, and appraise the nature of their characters.

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>56</sup> Luca Codignola, *Vatican: Archives de la Sacrée Congrégation de la Propagande*, (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1983). Series "Acta", vol. 38 (1669), Document 134, 55-56.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, Document 137, 212-213.

<sup>58</sup> Luca Codignola, *Guide to documents relating to French and British North America in the Archives of the Sacred Congregation "de Propaganda Fide" in Rome, 1622-1799* (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1991), 6-7.

### **2.3 Settlement and Religion in the 1660s.**

Many historians and writers in the past have thoroughly addressed the reasons for which Plaisance was officially settled in the mid-seventeenth century and the factors leading up to this colonisation. Briefly put, Plaisance was strategically and environmentally suitable for settlement, being close enough to the English capital to allow for military incursions. It provided a post at the base of the St. Lawrence and was located on the mainland of the island of Newfoundland, establishing the French crown's claim to the island. It was close to the fishing banks and had beaches suitable for the processing and drying of fish in vast quantities. The harbour was defensible and deep, and could be secured against unwanted ships by fastening a boom and chain across the entrance.<sup>59</sup>

Initially, the fishermen of Plaisance were seasonal, leaving France, Spain, England and Italy in the early spring and returning in autumn.<sup>60</sup> The association of the Basques with the dry fishery led them to choose harbours such as Plaisance, which allowed them to dry their fish prior to returning to Spain.<sup>61</sup> The French practised both the "dry" and "green" fisheries, recognising that each had

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<sup>59</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 4-5..

<sup>60</sup> Griffiths, "Fish, Fur and Folk," 48.

its own market in Europe and both were saleable.<sup>62</sup> Substantial quantities of salt were required for the latter form of preservation, and were often purchased in France, Spain or Portugal.<sup>63</sup> Initially, the French practice of the green fishery reduced their need for the beaches of Plaisance, while the Basques took advantage of the natural flake provided by the shores in the area.

The seasonal nature of the fishery in Newfoundland gave shape to the religious life of the men participating in the industry. Religion revolved, both practically and spiritually, around the concerns and lives of the adherents. Seasonal fishermen and seasonal clergy led very similar lives, both in terms of their day-to-day existence and in light of worldly affairs of symbolic importance. Their combined intimate links with the sea and her bounty as well as with the perils of the ocean gave shape to the system of practices, symbols and beliefs. For instance, the ritual blessing of a ship or the appealing to saints associated with maritime occupations was quite common.<sup>64</sup> In much the same way, the nature and activities of religious practitioners evolved with the changes in economy and social organisation. As the fishermen began to establish permanent dwellings,

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<sup>61</sup> Jean Daigle, "1650-1686: 'Un pays qui n'est pas fait'," in *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History*, eds. Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 62.

<sup>62</sup> Jean-François Brière, *La pêche française en Amérique du Nord au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Quebec: Corporation des Editions Fides, 1990), 4-5.

<sup>63</sup> Brière, *La pêche française*, 13-14.

<sup>64</sup> McManners, *The Clerical Establishment*, 63.

priests began to set up permanent religious structures, both of the physical and ritualistic varieties.

The chapel in Plaisance predated the arrival of the Récollets and was likely constructed during the early years of the official royal settlement.<sup>65</sup> Located on the beach among the flakes and houses, the chapel formed a spiritual nucleus around which religious life in the community revolved. A portrait of the chapel dating to 1690 was included in an illustration of the fort's defences by de Costebelle. In this diagram of the town of Plaisance, the chapel is distinctly illustrated, standing out from other buildings by virtue of its cross and steeple.<sup>66</sup> This diagram was drawn two years after the arrival of the Récollets. When the Récollets arrived to take over the mission in Plaisance, they were given the church to use as their place of worship and were charged with providing spiritual guidance to the inhabitants.<sup>67</sup> Rather than constructing a monastery of their own attached to the church, as was typically the custom, they elected to

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<sup>65</sup> There has been speculation by amateur historians as to the existence of a chapel built at a much earlier date by the Portuguese, but no documentation has surfaced to validate such a claim. The chapel in Plaisance is first listed in the census of 1687, along with those of St. Pierre, Hermitage, Grand Bank, Fortune, Havre Bertrand and St. Mary's. AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéros 3-5. Recensement général de l'île de Terre Neuve, 1687.

<sup>66</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 3.

<sup>67</sup> AAQ, Registre A, Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec à Seraphin Georgemé, Gardien du Couvent des Récollets de Notre-Dame des Anges près Québec. See Appendix A.4.

purchase a house in the community from a settler returning to France.<sup>68</sup> Between 1689 and 1690, there is no indication that the church had been destroyed and rebuilt, nor is there a sign that it had been altered significantly. In fact, it appears to have been one of the structures which survived even the English raid of 1690, as it was within its walls that the inhabitants were incarcerated by their attackers.<sup>69</sup> In terms of size, the church is one of the three largest buildings on the map, the other two being the governor's house and the Fort barracks. The chapel has two crosses on its roof and a large front door which appears to open towards the beach. These two features are significant; the former provided the inhabitants with an obvious sign of the importance of the church in the community while the latter faced the beach and flakes where most activity took place, symbolically linking the religious heart of the community with her economic life.

The origins of the ritual processions through the streets of Plaisance cannot be ascertained, but such processions probably existed during 1660s and 1670s, when La Palme and La Foippe governed the colony. It was common, on high feast days, for members of the community to parade through the town, ending at the church for mass. Traditionally, prominent participants in the

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<sup>68</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, Du fort de Plaisance le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

<sup>69</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141. Plaisance, le 28 août 1690. Joseph Denis au Ministre. See Appendix A.12.

fishing community, generally ship captains, carried two of the four poles of a dais in the procession.<sup>70</sup> This tradition was maintained through to the end of Plaisance as a French colony and became a matter of great social significance in Louisbourg.<sup>71</sup>

Few specifics are known about the form this display of devotion took in Plaisance, as only one or two brief mentions are made of it in the surviving documentation. Traditionally, the admiral and the vice-admiral, the first and second captains of the summer fleet to arrive in Plaisance, held the dais, along with two churchwardens.<sup>72</sup> These processions reflected the symbolic importance of the fishery by placing important personages of the fleets in key positions during the parade.<sup>73</sup> In so doing, they integrated the importance of the economic base into the spiritual milieu of the colony. This made religion both relevant, in that it was concerned with an obviously important part of life, and useful, in that it confirmed the importance of the social order and reinforced the role of religion

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<sup>70</sup> Charles de la Morandière, *Histoire de la pêche française de la morue dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (des origines à 1789), vol. 1, (Paris: G.P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1962), 437 and Archives municipales de St.-Jean-de-Lutz, e.e. 4. Also, see A. John Johnston, *Religion in Life at Louisbourg, 1713-1758*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 44.

<sup>71</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 44.

<sup>72</sup> De la Morandière, *Histoire de la pêche française*, vol. 1, 437 and Archives municipales de St.-Jean-de-Lutz, e.e. 4.

<sup>73</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 44.

in protecting both the participants in the fishery and the success of the enterprise.

The change from seasonal fishery to permanent establishment was a gradual process punctuated by the arrival of official colonists in 1662. The shift from a seasonal clergy to a permanent religious establishment was perhaps more gradual, as there was great difficulty in finding willing clerics to assume permanent posts in so remote a location.

In 1655, Louis XIV indicated his intention to establish a colony in Plaisance, despite the protests of the merchants of St.-Malo.<sup>74</sup> Over the objections of the economically powerful conglomerate of merchants known as the Breton Estates, the king appointed Sieur Kéréon governor of the colony. Kéréon's leadership was uneventful, and it is rather with the second governor, Nicolas Gargot, that events transpired regarding the establishment of the community and the documentation of religious life.

Gargot's term was short-lived; he was disliked by the Estates of Brittany for similar reasons to his predecessor, with one notable addition. Whereas with Kéréon, the Estates were satisfied with anticipating the wrong-doings of the future governor, in Gargot's case they actually voiced direct accusations. Gargot was monopolising the fishery; his only interest in the title of governor was to

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<sup>74</sup> Archives municipales de St.-Malo, B.B. 13.



wield the power of the position for personal gain.<sup>75</sup> In 1662, Gargot was recalled to France by the king. Louis XIV ordered him to take the command of two ships; *l'Aigle d'Or* and *la Fluste Royale*. Upon his return to Paris, Gargot was introduced to the man destined to replace him as governor of Plaisance, Thalour du Perron. Gargot's opinion of du Perron is recorded as being that the gentleman was an honest man, but too young for such a venture.<sup>76</sup> Du Perron lacked the necessary experience with which to lead and control the community. Along with his brother and an almoner, du Perron set off for Plaisance with Gargot.

The party set forth from Pari, travelling via the port of La Rochelle in 1662, with the destinations of Plaisance and Canada. Gargot left the du Perrons and their priest at Plaisance and proceeded to the task to which he was assigned. A year later, he passed back through Plaisance again and uncovered a rather ghastly series of past events. In *Memoires de la vie et des adventures de Nicolas Gargot*, the events follow a singularly grisly path.

Quelque mois apres le depart de Gargot, le  
Gouverneur, son frere, & l'Aumosnier, tous trois  
jeunes & sans experience, retournans de la chasse,  
avoient esté attaquez par leurs propres gens, qui  
avoient tué les deux freres à coups de fusils.  
l'Aumosnier apres avoir tiré hardiment le sien sur ces  
assassins, s'en estoit enfui dans les bois. Apres une  
action si noire, ces meurtriers entrerent dans le Fort,  
où apres s'estre enyvrez ils forcent quelques femmes &

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> De la Morandière, *Histoire de la pêche française*, vol. 1, 414.

s'entre battirent, de forte qu'il en demeura fur la place douze ou quinze. Peu de jours apres l'Aumosnier mourant de faim dans les Bois, se resolut de venir se rendre à la mercy de ces scelerats, qui assi tost qu'ils l'eurent en leur pouvoir, luy sendirent la teste à coups de hache, & luy coupent les mains.<sup>77</sup>

Upon hearing of this series of events, Gargot decided to have the criminals executed rather than wait for judgement from Quebec. For their heinous crimes, including among them having murdered a chaplain in such a fashion, the men were handed the standard maritime sentence of having their offending hands chopped off, to be followed by the execution of hanging and burning. They were required to carry out each others' sentences on a barge on the Saint Lawrence River just outside of Quebec.<sup>78</sup>

What is interesting with regards to these proceedings is not the grisly details of the crime or execution, but rather the fact that killing the priest was viewed with such disgust and anger. The chaplain had come back to the fort to beg for mercy and had been savagely dispatched, an act which, in that period, would have been seen as a crime against the state, the Church, and the divine. While mutiny certainly earned them their capital punishments, the murder of the chaplain emphasised the complete anarchy of the mutineers.

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<sup>77</sup> Pierre Groyer, *Memoires de la vie et des adventures de Nicolas Gargot, capitaine de marine* (Paris: s.n., 1668) 134-35.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

## 2.4 Religion in the 1670s

Sieur de la Palme succeeded du Perron as governor, serving from 1667 to 1670. During this time, little of religious interest appears to have transpired. La Palme was not a good governor; Plaisance did not prosper under his rule. He monopolised both the fishery and trade, charging exorbitant amounts for necessary items. His effect on the colony was noted by the French government and La Palme was succeeded in 1670 by Sieur de la Poippe.<sup>79</sup>

La Poippe was accorded strict directives for the governance of the community. He was not to seize the inhabitants' fish as payment for food and other necessities. He was not to tax the inhabitants or in any other way deter them from remaining in the colony. Under La Poippe, Plaisance began to show a glimmering of improvement, partially due to the governor's attempts and more substantially due to the subsidies to the colony from France.<sup>80</sup>

La Poippe took a census in 1671, in which "Messire Martin d'Hurte Ptre, Aumosnier" is listed among the other professionals of the community.<sup>81</sup> There are no surviving records of marriages, deaths or baptisms in Plaisance dating to

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<sup>79</sup> AN, Marine, Series B, vol. 2, 10. Le 20 février, 1670. Le ministre au Sr. de la Poippe.

<sup>80</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 6.

<sup>81</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 1. Rolle des gens de l'habitation de Plaisance, 1671.

1671, making it difficult to assess the functions served by this priest and how constant his presence was within the community.

Apart from these brief mentions of religion in the instructions of Colbert to La Poippe and the 1671 census, the documentary evidence surrounding religious life in Plaisance between the years 1663 and 1688 is sporadic and sketchy. There is a document from 1676 stating the importance of and necessity for a priest within the colony, but further than that, few actual data remain.<sup>82</sup> While ideally there were priests present to serve both fort and community, intermittent presence was more likely. The reality of the situation was that there were insufficient numbers of priests available in Canada to meet such expectations.<sup>83</sup> Eccles cites the statistical data of Guy Frégault, who notes that in 1698 there were 308 members of the clergy from various orders and areas, whereas in 1712 there were approximately four times as many. This sounds impressive as stated, but it becomes obvious that the percentage of the population represented by the clergy dropped dramatically when the number of clergy are viewed in light of the population. In 1698, the clergy formed 2.2 percent of the population, a number which dropped to 1.6 percent in fourteen years.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 68.

<sup>83</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 29.

<sup>84</sup> Guy Frégault, *Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Etudes* (Montréal: Fides, 1968) 88; Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 29.

It was unrealistic that a colony with a base population of approximately one hundred should have three priests, the number recommended by the crown. While the French crown recommended three almoners per community,<sup>85</sup> the reality was that a community was lucky to have one, especially if the colony was small or dispersed.

During the years prior to the arrival of the Récollets, there were undoubtedly priests of various sorts in the community. Their names have not all survived and the durations of their stays are unknown. Their presence, however, is indicated by the information provided in the census of 1698. This document records eight marriages which were celebrated in Plaisance prior to 1689 and several others for which the data are not entirely conclusive. In 1665, Thomas Pisk and Anne Raimond were married, to be followed three years later by Philipe Zemar and Marie Anne Chevravau.<sup>86</sup> The next marriage on record occurred between François Bertrand and Jeanne Giraud in 1678. Two years later in 1680, François Dufaux married Anne Carmel. The year 1683 saw two marriages, those of Simon Gilbert to Anne Trotel and Jean Debourdieu to Marie Bouché. Finally, two years prior to the arrival of the Récollets, François Vrignaud married Jeanne

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<sup>85</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol 1, 65.

<sup>86</sup> From 1663 to 1666, following the death of Nicolas Gargot, a soldier, Bellot, led the community. In response to a letter from Bellot advising that there were a number of marriageable girls in the colony, the French Ministry replied that he was to ensure that they were raised and married according to the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. BN, Manuscrits français, N.A. no. 9282, 230.

Aubert. There may well have been other performances of the sacrament of marriage, but these are the only ones listed in the census of 1698.<sup>87</sup>

At some point during each of the years 1665, 1668, 1678, 1680, 1683, and 1687 there was a priest in Plaisance and the surrounding environs with the power to administer the sacrament of marriage. Whether this priest was a resident or travelled on one of the ships is unknown. Given the later problem that certain inhabitants were unrelenting Protestants, it is possible, although highly improbable, that at least two of these marriages were performed by itinerant Protestant ministers.<sup>88</sup> It is conceivable that the religious who performed the marriage in 1687 was the same almoner who was replaced by the Récollet friars, although such a hypothesis is also speculative. The parish records for Plaisance are non-existent and there is no record of the names of those performing the marriages in Plaisance. Further, the name of the almoner replaced by Récollets Joseph Denis, Xiste Le Tac and Didache Pelletier in 1689 was not recorded in the letters describing the episcopal visit.

In effect, literature concerning the number and names of the secular clergy sent to Plaisance prior to the arrival of the Franciscans remains

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<sup>87</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>88</sup> No concrete evidence exists of itinerant Protestant ministers in Newfoundland during this time-period, and their presence in the French areas of the Province is most unlikely given the attitudes of the French Crown towards Protestantism in general. Even if they were in existence, it is doubtful that the French state would have recognized the validity of the marriage services performed.

incomplete. There was undoubtedly quite a number of almoners present in Plaisance, but it is reasonably safe to say that, given the dangers, isolation, and living conditions, most did not stay long.

Each priest would have been responsible for the outlying reaches of his parish. One almoner could serve the entire Plaisance area, requiring him to move from village to village fairly frequently. A great number of the priests connected with Plaisance were seasonal practitioners, in the sense that they were only in the community during the summer months.

### 2.5 Parat and his Priest

Apart from seasonal and temporary priests, there is mention of an almoner who spent a considerable amount of time in Plaisance prior to the arrival of the Récollets. On 2 June, 1685, the newly-named governor, M. de Parat arrived in Plaisance. After having studied the situation in Plaisance, Parat wrote to France regarding his opinion of the colony. His assessment was not overly positive. The previous year's fishery had been an abysmal failure and many of the colonists had returned to France. Of those left, many were facing financial ruin, often due to the actions of the fishery admiral who exacted exorbitant sums for everyday goods and paid very little for labour. Finally, Parat remarked that the lack of a resident priest was extremely upsetting to many of the remaining inhabitants and recommended that a chaplain be appointed as

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soon as possible.<sup>89</sup> In the summary of letters from Canada, Parat's request is phrased as "il prétend qu'il ne reste plus de religionnaires en ce lieu".<sup>90</sup>

One year later Parat toured the outlying French settlements near Plaisance, apparently accompanied by his personal almoner, the Père Cordelier Laurent Morin.<sup>91</sup> It is recorded that this religious said mass at each settlement, after which Parat itemised the French laws regarding the fishery and beaches, exhorting the settlers to follow them. On 9 July 1686, Parat drew up a contract with the residents of St. Pierre outlining an agreement whereby a priest would be supported by the community in return for four months of instructing the children and performing church functions.<sup>92</sup>

Many would have said that Parat and his almoner were well-suited to each other, as they appear to have engaged in many similar vices during their time in Plaisance. Both were accused of living with women to whom they were not married, thereby setting a poor example for the general populace.<sup>93</sup> The inhabitants complained of the immorality of both Parat and Morin, with the end

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<sup>89</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 8, 176-196v.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 294. Résumé des lettres et mémoires du Sr. Parat, 1690; AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 279. Parat au Ministre, le 23 août, 1686.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*



result being that Morin was sent away and Parat was separated from his carnal temptation by order of the king.<sup>94</sup>

## **2.6 Protestantism**

For the crown to expect that New France would be entirely Roman Catholic was unrealistic. France herself was not a religiously homogenous society at that time and New France acted as her mirror. With the painful honesty of all accurate reflections, New France revealed the religious tensions underlying French religious life. Protestantism in France had developed steadily, fuelled by the religious wars and state persecutions. The Edict of Nantes allowed for rapid growth of Protestant sentiments, while the Revocation of 1685 provided incentive for many to retain their beliefs in the face of persecution. The sheer brutality with which Protestants in ports such as La Rochelle were slain disgusted many.<sup>95</sup> The orders of the crown were to reduce the Protestant population to a third and to effect as many conversions as possible. The reality of the situation was far more violent, ending in mass slaughters of Protestants which, in 1688,

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<sup>94</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 13, 141. A Versailles, le 30 mars 1687, See Appendix A.3; AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 184. See Appendix A.8.

<sup>95</sup> McManners, *The Religion of the People and the Politics of Religion*, vol. 2 of *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, The Oxford History of the Christian Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 811.

outraged even Rome.<sup>96</sup> If the desired effect was to force the Protestants to abjure their faith, the result was often quite the opposite. Contrary to the crown's belief, many of the French Protestants were strongly attached to their ideals and all did not switch back to Catholicism at the first threat of persecution.

While initially the slaughter, imprisonment, assault and financial destruction of Protestants was a state-sponsored popular event, the sheer inhumanity eventually caused many staunch Roman Catholics to question it. Measures taken against Protestants varied, including such means as imprisonment of household heads, torture, and being forced to pay the upkeep of military garrisons to the point of financial ruin. Women and children were removed from their homes, with women being shorn and sequestered in convents, and their children being fostered by Catholic families or sent to schools for orphans. The overwhelming sentiment was that one must force the parents, but the children could be taught. The overall effect was that French Catholics were seen as cruelly brutal and unjustifiably sadistic in their treatment of French citizens.<sup>97</sup>

Reform members in New France also felt the crunch of the Evocation, although not quite so severely. Some Protestants had fled to the New World in the mid-1600s in the hopes of making a better living, both financially and

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 584. The Pope's edict of July 19, 1688 read, "we do not approve in any manner of these sort of forced conversions which, usually, are not sincere."

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 577.

religiously. Many Protestants were merchants and engaged in industries such as the Newfoundland fishery or the continental fur trade. In fact, as a whole, Protestants were often financially more stable than their Roman Catholic counterparts.<sup>98</sup> Their industry and financing were indispensable to the establishment of colonial enterprises. Thus the extreme measures of persecution used in France were not enacted in New France. Baron Lahontan suggested rather dryly that the French crown might solve two problems at once if it allowed Protestants and Jews to emigrate to New France.<sup>99</sup> Apart from previously-failed attempts by Protestants at similar establishments,<sup>100</sup> there was one overwhelming reason for which such a venture was not remotely feasible, namely the ambitions of the monarch for the new colonies.

Protestantism was not officially condoned in New France. Part of the aim of the French crown was to avoid the horrendous pattern of religious deviance from the Roman Catholic Church, frequently found in France during the seventeenth century.<sup>101</sup> Religious observance and knowledge in France was far below what the Church desired. As Vauchez argues, it is difficult to say whether

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 566.

<sup>99</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, "The Persistence of the Protestant Presence in New France, 1541-1760," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History*, 2 (1974): 29.

<sup>100</sup> Protestant investors attempted Colonies in Canada (1541), Brazil (1555) and the Carolinas (1562). Jaenen, *Role of the Church*, 12-13.

<sup>101</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 28.

popular religion was, "a coherent system of magical beliefs or a coarsened Christianity adapted to rural civilisation."<sup>102</sup> In McManner's opinion, the latter was the case for early modern France, with the clergy filling the roles of religious leaders to an only partially comprehending Christian body.<sup>103</sup>

The situation surrounding Christianity in France proper was grim. Eccles outlines France's religious situation during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, estimating that the religious knowledge of the priests was often only slightly better than that of the people, which was to say poor at best.<sup>104</sup> Towards the end of the seventeenth century, a Breton priest wrote that the people of his parish were ignorant of the basic tenets of Christianity and that it was his first duty to instil fundamental orthodox precepts into his congregation.<sup>105</sup> Comments such as the above from men like Father Julien Mannoir of Lower Brittany, illustrate a general deficiency in the understanding of basic precepts of the Roman Catholic faith in areas of France.

During the colonisation of New France, ultimate Roman Catholic religious authority was held by the Vatican, although policy and planning was actually implemented by the Sacred Congregation "de Propaganda Fide." Missionary

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<sup>102</sup> André Vauchez, "Eglise et la vie religieuse au moyen âge," *Annales. Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations*. (Paris, 1973): 1050.

<sup>103</sup> McManners, *The Clerical Establishment*, 189-192.

<sup>104</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 28.

<sup>105</sup> Jean Délumeau, *Catholicism entre Luther et Voltaire* (Paris, 1971), 256-57.

endeavours as well as simple seasonal priests travelling with the fishing fleet were required to clear their actions with the Propaganda prior to conducting their religious work. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Propaganda appointed vicars apostolic to act on its behalf due largely to the unwieldy size and expanse of New France. In 1658, Laval was appointed the first vicar apostolic, essentially making him a bishop *in partibus infidelium*. As Codignola puts it, "he had the spiritual powers of a bishop, but depended on Propaganda."<sup>106</sup> The full title of Bishop was accorded in 1674.<sup>107</sup>

While not all almoners cleared their departure with the vicar or bishop prior to departure,<sup>108</sup> most substantial missionary endeavours obtained the necessary *lettres patentes* from both the monarch and the Propaganda. The Propaganda was determined that higher standards would be held for New France than had been met in France. As they were able to exert a modicum of control over who travelled to the colonies, the Propaganda and its vicars attempted to insure that the clergy selected for travel were well-educated and of a high moral

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<sup>106</sup> Codignola, *Guide to Documents*, 6.

<sup>107</sup> Lucien Campeau, *L'évêché de Québec (1674): Aux origines du premier diocèse érigé en Amérique française* (Québec: La Société Historique de Québec, 1974), viii.

<sup>108</sup> This is evident in the case of the previously mentioned de Neufville, who travelled to Newfoundland with the fishermen for several years under the auspices of the Bishop of St.-Malo before coming to the understanding that he was required to clear his activities with the Propaganda first. Codignola, *Guide to Documents*, 5.

standing. There was also an express desire to weed out Protestants travelling to New France in an attempt to establish a homogeneously Roman Catholic society.

There was a variety of reasons for which Protestants were to be kept out of New France if at all possible, although it should be noted that the efforts were not particularly successful. The practical reasons for keeping Protestants out of New France were primarily military, as expressed by Bishop Laval when he stated

Upon examining the matter from the viewpoint of the State, it appears to be no less consequential. Everyone knows that the Protestants in general are not as attached to His Majesty as are the Catholics. Quebec is not very far from Boston and other English cities; to multiply the number of Protestants in Canada would be to give occasion to foment revolutions.<sup>109</sup>

The fact remained, however, that there were indeed Protestant merchants in New France. Persecution of Protestants, be they French or English, was not rampant in the colonies and measures to convert the "schismatics", as they were called, did not approach those taken in France.

While Roman Catholicism was the official norm for New France and, by extension, Plaisance, Protestantism continued to exist within the colonies. While many of the Protestants of New France were English, there was also a French Protestant or Huguenot portion of society. Similarly, there were English colonists within French communities who were staunchly Catholic. Essentially, not all Protestants were English and not all English were Protestant. By the same token,

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<sup>109</sup> Cornelius Jaenen, *Role of the Church*, 66; A.S.Q., Manuscripts 14, Memorandum of Laval concerning Protestants, 1670, 207.

not all French were Catholic and not all Catholics were French. In New France during the seventeenth century, there was no official Protestant church nor were official community meetings held by Protestants,<sup>110</sup> although the degree to which individuals or smaller groups practised their faith is a matter of speculation. The Newfoundland community of Plaisance was home to a number of Protestant followers during the seventeenth century, a situation which caused Governor Antoine Parat no end of grief during his term in office. The tactics used by Parat were essentially the same as those used elsewhere to rout out Protestantism. Parat bought conversions, imposed financial penalties on those unwilling to convert, and seized the daughters of men whose behaviour was insufficiently Catholic, sending these girls to the Ursuline convent in Quebec for further religious education.<sup>111</sup>

It is impossible to know exactly when the first Protestant arrived in Plaisance. There were certainly English settlers in the area there prior to the official French settlement, although their religious affiliation was not documented. In 1686, a memoir of Governor Parat recorded that there remained only one family of Huguenots in Plaisance and one Protestant Englishman who requested more time in which to convert. Parat sent a Protestant surgeon back to France and requested further information on how to deal with French Protestants

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<sup>110</sup> Jaenen, *Role of the Church*, 16.

<sup>111</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1, 454.

on English ships and what to do with the possessions of an English Protestant who died in Plaisance.<sup>112</sup>

Parat had engaged in a battle with the Protestants of the Plaisance community and had succeeded in convincing most to recant their schismatic ways and rejoin the Roman Catholic family. Many of the Protestants abjured and signed certificates stating that they officially converted to Catholicism. Parat's tactics included giving financial subsidies to Protestants who chose to return to the Catholic Church. The validity of these conversions was questioned by authorities in France, who were not entirely convinced that simply signing a paper was evidence of a complete change of faith.<sup>113</sup> The example of the transgressions of a Plaisance man by the name of Alaire illustrates this point. Alaire, a new convert from la Rochelle, was accused by Parat of fishing on Sundays and feast days, a practice proscribed by the Roman Catholic Church. Examples like Alaire were seen as evidence by many that conversion on paper did not necessarily mean correct belief and behaviour within the community.<sup>114</sup>

A letter dating to 7 June 1689 from Versailles to Parat appears to have been in response to a record of action taken against a *Sieur Pasteur* of Plaisance by Parat. The letter reads

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<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 381-382.

<sup>113</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 10, 22-22v.

<sup>114</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 10, 192-192v.



Le Roy a approuvé la conduite que vous avez tenu pour la fille du Sieur Pasteur, en l'envoyant aux Religieuses de Québec, et sa Majesté vous laisse la liberté d'obliger les nouveaux convertis dont la conduite n'est pas assez exacte à y envoyer leurs filles pour leur apprendre les devoirs de la religion et y estre gardez jusqu'à ce qu'on trouve à les marier à de bons catholiques.

Vous observerez, cependant, d'y apporter quelque ménagement, en sorte que ce soing n'effarouche point les nouveaux convertis, et ne les oblige point à prendre le party de passer aux Anglois.<sup>115</sup>

Parat was thus ordered to send the daughters of men who proved insufficiently Catholic to Quebec, where they were to be taught by the Ursulines until they were of marriageable age. This course of action appears to indicate that French thought of the period held with forcing or bribing the parents to convert, but educating their children in the Roman Catholic faith so that future generations would not cause the same problems as their parents. The provision of financial incentives to adults willing to convert also had precedence in France as a method widely practised and highly criticised. Purchased conversions were viewed with scepticism, as is evident in the reaction of the authorities to Parat's letter.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1, 454.

<sup>116</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 10, 22-22v.

Parat was to be careful in his treatment of these schismatics, as placing too much pressure on them might drive them to seek asylum among the English. There was a tenuous line drawn by Parat and the French administration. On the one hand, Protestants were seen as a threat due to their divergence from the religious norm, a dissension which rendered them more like the English. It was in the best interests of the community and the administration to maintain religious homogeneity, but care had to be taken that the path to creating such unity did not result in the very situation avoided. If the French did not pressure the Protestants to convert, they nurtured a threat in their community, whereas if they pushed too hard, the reaction was exactly that which was being avoided.

The connection between the Protestants and the English was made even more consequential in the eyes of the French authorities in 1690, in which year information gained by English visitors to the town was believed by the French to have laid Plaisance open to attack.<sup>117</sup> While such a claim may simply be suspicious assumption on the part of authorities already disenchanted with Parat's leadership and personality, it does serve to identify the prejudice felt towards the English. If men such as Pastour de Costebelle, leader of the military garrison and eventual governor of the colony, held to such ideas, chances are good that prejudice spread quite quickly throughout the garrison and colony.

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<sup>117</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 301.

The bulk of Parat's conversion attempts occurred between the years 1685 and 1689, chronologically hedged on either side by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the arrival of personages with religious authority greater than his own. It is likely that the spiritual impact of the Revocation on Parat was more political than personal; he followed it to look good rather than out of personal conviction. This is conjecture, based primarily on his lack of ethical religious behaviour in the community and his zealous application of the law to a M. Bassett, whom he persecuted in the hopes of improving his reputation with the Ministry of the Marine in France.<sup>118</sup> In fact, his tactics backfired and his standing at Court suffered when the King issued a statement to the effect that he was very displeased with the actions of Parat and that Bassett had been a Catholic all along.

The issue of how to treat Protestantism within the colony transpired repeatedly in a variety of situations, as evidenced by the letters between Parat and the Ministry in France. Regulations were established regarding the acceptance of English settlers into the colony. While relatively few English were permitted to join the French settlements, popular opinion among the English held otherwise.

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<sup>118</sup> Parat seized the ship and goods of Bassett in 1687, as he believed that Bassett was a Protestant attempting to conduct trade with the French and thereby instilling dissension within the Plaisance community. Parat sent Bassett to France, whereupon it was discovered that Bassett was a Roman Catholic and that Parat had overstepped his bounds in his zealous attempt to enforce the French laws of religion. René Baudry, "Parat, Antoine," in the *DCB*, vol. I, edited by David M. Mayne (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 530.

In 1671, Captain Davis wrote that conditions in Newfoundland among the English colonists were not conducive to their remaining in English settlements as

I fear that most of the inhabitants being so affrighted with this order for their removing, if not speedily prevented will repair to the French who fortify two places keeping in one fort fifty soldiers in continual pay. And are very kind to the English who come to them. The King of France, if they require it sending them a protection and giving them a year's salary. <sup>119</sup>

The most common way in which French and English interchanged was through marriage, as is reported in a report to the Council of Trades and Plantations in England, "The French draw away many Englishmen by intermarrying with them..."<sup>120</sup>

Later years saw an increased awareness on the part of the French of the vulnerable position in which English inhabitants in Plaisance placed them. The French adopted a much more stringent view of English conversions, trade and marriage. The danger presented by recent English converts to Catholicism outweighed the community's desire to attract new members. While not all conversions were disbelieved, those of English settlers presented the most risk as the converts often still had strong ties to their maternal land and faith. English were no longer allowed to join the community of Plaisance, regardless of their

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<sup>119</sup> Colonial Papers, vol. xxvii, no. 27.

<sup>120</sup> Colonial Papers, vol. 35 and 38, March 21, 1675 - Mayor of Southhampton.

religious status. Inheritance of property was only allowed within the community by Catholics, especially if the deceased had been English.<sup>121</sup>

The issue of Protestantism in Plaisance created a tension between the spiritual and economic life of the community. On the one hand, Protestants posed a threat to the political and military life of the colony, to say nothing of the religious turmoil caused by deviant religious beliefs in such a small town. On the other hand, Protestants were important to the economy of Plaisance and represented more of a threat if they left with whatever money and knowledge they had gained from the colony. The clear focus was on English Protestants as potential traitors, although French Protestants were addressed as being likely to move to the English camp if provoked or pressured. For the purposes of prejudice, therefore, French Protestants were to be distrusted in much the same way as the English. The shift in attitude of French government towards Protestantism was felt quite suddenly in Plaisance and meant a radical change from accepting English converts to having nothing to do with any English at all. In light of the governor's behaviour, a sudden shift to displays of prejudice against the English and Protestantism likely caused an uproar.

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<sup>121</sup> AN, Colonies, vol. 10, 39-42.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

During the middle of the seventeenth century, Plaisance's religious climate was marked by extreme variability. The majority of priests who travelled to Plaisance did so on fishing vessels and were primarily concerned with the well-being of the crews. In fact, these men may have served double-duty as they very likely provided the only religious presence in the colony of Plaisance during certain years. While it is true that the colony did have resident priests at different periods, permanency and steadfastness were not hallmarks of these men. Rather, the priests in Plaisance's early years appear to have stayed for only a short number of years, if that long, and were not able to provide the sorts of examples the French crown was hoping to supply to the new community. Further, the constant changeover of religious meant that the colony was without the consistent religious background that could have significantly contributed to the overall stability and functioning of the colony.

In this fashion, the spiritual and ritual features of the colony reflected the economic and political structures of Plaisance. Economically, the fishery played the key role in French Newfoundland, providing not only a source of revenue for many, but also a source of priests. Rites grew around the significance of the fishery in the colony, as was the case in the processions on feast and holy days. Even the very exploitation of the fishery itself was religiously inspired, as Roman

Catholic countries in the European market required abstinence from meat as a staple of their religious diet.<sup>122</sup>

Attempts by religion to shape the way in which the fishery was exploited met with only a modicum of success, as the colonists could not often afford to pause from their labours.<sup>123</sup> Problems of fishing on Sunday and holy days were not uncommon, and the afore-mentioned Alaire was not the only person to have braved divine wrath to earn a living.<sup>124</sup> The lack of religious stability in the colony betokened a fragmented ecclesiastical foundation which was not able to exert an influence over its followers. Whatever religious sentiment was felt, it was most likely shaped by the cultural backgrounds and experiences of the inhabitants rather than the influence of the priests.

Religious sentiment in Plaisance, from the earliest days of the community to the year 1689, was also in constant flux. External influences, such as the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, combined in later years with such internal problems as the immorality of the governor and his chaplain to create a general

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<sup>122</sup> It should be noted that even this required abstinence from meat during certain portions of the religious year did not automatically lead to a diet of fish. Poverty would have provided many with a great incentive to continue eating whatever food was available to them, as purchasing fish often entailed an added and unsupportable expense.

<sup>123</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 8.

<sup>124</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 10, 192-192v. De Neufville complained of this problem as being as regularity. Codignola, *Vatican*, Series "Acta", Vol. 38 (1669), Document 134, 55-56.

sentiment of unrest within the community. There was no permanent resident priest on whom the inhabitants could rely either for spiritual guidance or the moderation of the influence of the governor. Protestantism and its treatment within the Plaisance community caused further tensions, as many of those forced to recant were prominent members of the Plaisance society and represented a strong economic force within the population. In a community of roughly one hundred people, the disruption of the lives of a few prominent members of society affected all members to some degree. The problem of Protestantism was felt by Roman Catholic citizens of Plaisance both insofar as it existed as a threat to their own practices and beliefs and in that the eradication of it caused instability in the community as a whole. The combination of poor governance, lack of a permanent, reliable priest, and Protestantism disrupted the dynamics of the community and generated a feeling of malaise.

The situation was ripe for a permanent resident priest, although the strength of character displayed by the governor was such that one priest alone might have buckled under when faced with conflict. Further, the record established by Morin had probably somewhat reduced the faith of the populace in secular clergy. The ideal for the situation was therefore a group of religious prepared to establish a permanent mission in the area and to do battle, when necessary, with the administrative body to ensure a smooth running of the social and religious network. The Récollets, as an institution strongly tied to the French crown, represented a moral arm of the French government. Their affiliation with



the Bishop of Quebec as well as their strong historical links with the crown were able to function as watchdogs for the French government and keep an eye on the governors and the population. They were also in a better tactical position for effecting control over Protestants in the community as they had a permanent base physically located within the community with their primary occupation being the maintenance of religious hegemony. In effect, they were to act as a counterbalance to the absolute power held by the governor.

### **Chapter Three**

#### **The Establishment of the Récollets in Plaisance, 1689.**

##### **3.1 Introduction**

The religious life of Plaisance changed dramatically in 1689 with the first episcopal visit and subsequent establishment of a monastery in the French capital. Prior to the visit of Bishop Saint-Vallier of Quebec in 1689, Plaisance, St. Pierre and the surrounding French towns were served by secular clergy. Despite the establishment of Récollet missions in other locations in New France in 1615, Plaisance remained the domain of the secular priests prior to the arrival of the bishop and his entourage. The nature of the official religious establishment in Plaisance transformed from being primarily regulated by the governor and other secular authorities to one controlled by an established group of friars. The Récollets established a hospice in the town, provided religious services for the army and inhabitants, and set themselves forth as models for moral behaviour. They also shifted the balance of power within the community, diminishing the spiritual and economic autonomy of the governor and reaffirming the partnership of Church and state in maintaining order.

##### **3.2 Saint-Denis in New France**

The Récollets began in sixteenth-century France as a reformed group of Franciscans who wished to adhere more closely to the ideals of St. Francis of Assisi, the thirteenth-century founder of the Franciscan order. The reform

movement which sparked their genesis began with the Spanish noble, Jean de la Puebla. It quickly spread throughout Europe and inspired movements such as the *reformati* in Italy, the *Descalzos* in Spain, and the *Récollets* in France.<sup>125</sup> The *récollection* actually did not arrive in France until 113 years after its nascence, at which point it was introduced to the country by the Duke of Nevers. Thereafter it spread quickly, gaining favour with the nobility and eventually the monarchy. The Récollets' humble lifestyle appealed to many who had become cynical of the monastic groups within France,<sup>126</sup> and the distinctive appearance of their brown or grey homespun cloaks and clogs or sandals set them apart from other Franciscan groups as much as did their lifestyle.<sup>127</sup>

At the time during which missionary endeavours to French Canada were first taking shape, there were four provinces of Récollets in France; those of Brittany, Saint-André, Saint-Bernardin, and Saint-Denis. The following year, the province of Aquitaine was established.<sup>128</sup> In 1615, the Franciscan Récollets of the

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<sup>125</sup> Hervé Blais, "Les Récollets: qu'est-ce à dire?" in Odoric-Marie Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique des récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France, 1615-1645, 1670-1849*. Odoric Jouve with the collaboration of Archange Godbout Hervé Blais et René Bacon. (Montreal, Quebec : Bellarmin, c1996), xvi.

<sup>126</sup> Blais, "Les Récollets," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, xviii-xix.

<sup>127</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 30-31.

<sup>128</sup> Odoric-M. Jouve, *Les Frères Mineurs à Québec* (Quebec, Couvent des SS. Stigmates: Dussault & Proulx, 1905), 17.

Province of Saint-Denis sent four missionaries to New France,<sup>129</sup> thus beginning the relationship between Saint-Denis and the New World. Missionary work was not a new concept to the Récollets, but rather lay at the very heart of their mandate, for although the Province of Saint-Denis was formed in 1612, branches of the order in other countries predated the French movement and were engaged in a variety of foreign missionary endeavours.<sup>130</sup>

From 1615 to 1800, with the exception of the years 1630-1669, during which the Récollets were evicted from New France, friars from the Province of Saint-Denis and Aquitaine, the latter of which provided the majority of religious services for Acadia, were among the most active participants in New France's religious development.<sup>131</sup> In 1618, the potential of the New World missions was recognised by the Récollets and the colonies' need of the Récollets was recognised by many secular authorities. Guido Bentivoglio, titular Archbishop of Rhodes *in partibus infidelium*, wrote to Joseph Le Caron, *Père Provincial* of the French Récollets, that by virtue of the request of Pope Paul V, the Récollets of Saint-Denis were authorised to send "quelques-uns de ses confrères en territoires païens," and

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<sup>129</sup> Marion Habig and René Bacon, "L'Oeuvre des Récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, xxxvi.

<sup>130</sup> Blais, "Les Récollets," xxviii-xxxiii.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, xxv.

that Bentivoglio, in his capacity as member of the Propaganda, was to accord them the necessary privileges with which to conduct their mission.<sup>132</sup>

The privileges accorded Saint-Denis by Rome were affirmed by the French monarch, Louis XIII, who bestowed upon Saint-Denis similar rights.<sup>133</sup> In this document, the Récollets were given the care of the inhabitants of Canada and were responsible for tending to the souls of the colonists and military. Specific privileges included remaining in New France and continuing their missions and building as many convents as were necessary to their work. Further, the Provincial Father of the Province of Saint-Denis was permitted to send to Canada as many Récollets as he deemed necessary. The king also mentions the other provinces of Récollets, stating

...auquel païs de Canada aulcuns aultres Religieux Recollectz ne pourront aller, fi ce n'est pas l'obedience qui leur sera donnée par ledict Provincial de ladicte province de St. Denis en France, & ce affin d'esviter toute dissention qui pourroit survenir, faisant dessences à tous les Maistres des Portz & Havvres de permettre qu'aulcuns Religieux de l'ordre de St. François s'embarquent pour passer & aller au dict pays de Canada sinon soubz l'obedience du dict Provincial, & de celuy qu'il commettra pour superieur, & en tesmoignans plus particulièrement nostre affection envers les dictz Religieux, Nous avons

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<sup>132</sup> Vatican. Archives de la Sacrée Congrégation de la Propagande. MG 17 A 25, Series 3, SOCG, Vol. 259, 190rv, 195rv. Le 20 mars, 1618. Acta 39; Lettre 39.

<sup>133</sup> Eugène Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique de la Nouvelle France ou Canada depuis sa découverte (mil cinq cents quatre) jusque en l'an mil six cents trente deux*, (Paris: G. Fishbacher, 1888), 173-176. See Appendix A.15.

**Iceux, ensemble leurs conventz & monasteres pris en  
nostre protection & sauvegarde.<sup>134</sup>**

**The Franciscans of Canada were thus all subject to the Récollet Provincial of the Province of Saint-Denis. While the majority of Récollets who travelled on missionary endeavours to New France were from the Province of Saint-Denis proper, there were a number who hailed from other areas of France. In Plaisance, for instance, the Récollets of Brittany took over from the Récollets of Saint-Denis in 1701. By the king's afore-mentioned statute, the Récollets of Brittany must have been in Plaisance with the express permission of the Récollets of Paris.<sup>135</sup>**

**Jurisdiction and ecclesiastical politics aside, the royal selection of the Récollets as arbiters of the faith in New France was a logical choice. In the early years of New France, there was little room for contemplative orders.<sup>136</sup> The need for preachers, pastors and priests was overwhelming, royal and ecclesiastical monies could not be spared to establish a Carthusian order, for example. The Récollets, a working order used to living among the people and interacting in worldly affairs, were more suited to the tasks at hand than were groups such as**

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<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> A further discussion of the Breton Récollets' assumption of the Plaisance mission is to be found in Chapter Six of this thesis, entitled, "The Récollets from Brittany, 1701-1714."

<sup>136</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 29.

the Cistercians or even many branches of the Benedictines.<sup>137</sup> The ministry of the Récollets included providing spiritual solace for people of all levels of society, caring for the sick or dying, helping the unfortunate, and providing education for the children.

Apart from the services they provided, the working orders were more suitable by virtue of the conditions in which they were accustomed to living. Working in the midst of communities and depending largely on the gifts of those to whom they ministered, they were accustomed to humble living conditions. They were also used to hard work and often came from backgrounds similar to that of townspeople. While living conditions in Canada were often better than those in France,<sup>138</sup> the amount of work a priest or friar was required to do for his subsistence was much greater.<sup>139</sup>

### 3.3 The Récollets of Notre-Dame des Anges, Québec.

Initially a chapel was erected in Quebec to meet the religious needs of both clergy and inhabitants, and a convent was not long in following. In 1619, plans were begun for the construction of a conventual dwelling along with a

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<sup>137</sup> The contemplative orders followed the mendicants in a second wave of monastic establishment, beginning in the late eighteenth-century, once a solid social and political structure had been established.

<sup>138</sup> Allen Greer, *People of New France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 25 *passim*.

<sup>139</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 30.

church, slightly larger and more elaborate than the existing chapel. The church was finished shortly after the convent and was blessed by the Provincial Commissioner on 25 May 1621. The church and convent were dedicated to *Notre-Dame des Anges*. In 1622, the convent was awarded the right to receive and train novices, thereby gaining the ability to train its own missionaries.<sup>140</sup> Not only did this enable the Récollets of Saint-Denis to properly train their clergy, it also provided them with the opportunity to admit to their order those born in the New World.

From the community of *Notre-Dame des Anges*, missionaries were dispersed to their various posts throughout New France and Acadia. Among the prominent members of the Récollet community of Quebec were three men who played pivotal roles in both the Plaisance mission and the entire missionary programme in New France. Joseph Denis, Xiste Le Tac, and lay-brother Didache Pelletier all hailed from the Province of Saint-Denis and served the communities in the area of Quebec prior to being selected for the Plaisance mission.

### 3.4 The Establishment of the Plaisance mission.

While profits had been increasing steadily during the 1670s, the decade prior to the arrival of the Récollets in Plaisance saw a decided lull in the

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<sup>140</sup> Jouve, *Freres mineurs*, 60.



economic base of the community.<sup>141</sup> The upheaval experienced during the 1680s, coupled with the hardships inflicted by several of the governors provided a stark contrast to the prosperity of the 1670s.<sup>142</sup> Overall, the situation in Plaisance was not optimal by any stretch of the imperialistic imagination. Profits from the fishery fluctuated from year to year, much as they usually did,<sup>143</sup> the fort was not in good repair<sup>144</sup> and the governors and colonists had not developed resources other than the fishery.<sup>145</sup> It was reported by one observer that if a man stopped fishing to engage in another activity, even if this activity were his trained

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<sup>141</sup> Governors such as la Poippe during the 1670s increased the profits of the community and broadened the economic base to include livestock and a small degree of agriculture. Subsequent governors such as Parat were generally responsible for undoing the good works of their predecessors. Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 6.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.* The report made by the English as found in *The Acts of the Privy Council of Great Britain*, Colonial Series, vol. 1 (London, 1910), 621 stands in contrast to later French descriptions of the area and its colony.

<sup>143</sup> This would not have been such a problem in a more established community, but Plaisance was too fragile to sustain years of poor catches. Such situations placed stress on the already impoverished inhabitants, sinking them further into debt and leaving many without sufficient food or supplies.

<sup>144</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 262-264.

<sup>145</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 11. The governors were under orders to expand the economic base of the colony through the practice of agriculture. La Poippe appears to have been at least moderately successful, but other governors succeeded in undoing his hard work. La Palme was so ordered twice, but apparently failed to advance significantly in the desired area. (AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 25v. and AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 2, 61v-63v.) Further, the king contributed livestock in the hopes of augmenting the meager array present on the island, but apparently this measure did little good. (AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 207v)

*métier*, the fellow would be unable to support his family.<sup>146</sup> The situation awaiting the Récollets in 1689 was rather dismal.

The governor of the colony since 1685, Antoine Parat, despised his post and had applied for a reassignment.<sup>147</sup> In fact, he received it and was awaiting transport and his replacement, both of which were delayed until 1690. Apart from his personal feelings regarding Newfoundland, his resignation may have been inspired by royal recognition of his decidedly incompetent administration.<sup>148</sup> Coupled with his professional ineptitude, his questionable morals gave the Intendant of the Marine in France sufficient cause to suspect that Parat was not suited to the post of governor. The fact that he was not happy in New France provided a tidy justification for the removal of one so obviously unsuited to his position. In the interim, the Récollet Establishment served the dual purpose of filling the role of priests and surveillance in Plaisance.

### 3.5 Saint-Vallier and the Establishment of the Plaisance mission.

While a great deal has been written on Bishop Saint-Vallier, only a limited amount of this voluminous textual accumulation has any bearing on his

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<sup>146</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 8.

<sup>147</sup> Baudry, "Parat, Antoine," 530.

<sup>148</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 10.

involvement in the Plaisance mission.<sup>149</sup> Briefly, Bishop Saint-Vallier was born Jean-Baptiste de la Croix de Chevrères de Saint-Vallier, son of a Dauphiné nobleman. His family connections ensured his rapid rise through the French ecclesiastical hierarchy. Upon the completion of his theological training at Saint-Sulpice, he was granted the position of almoner in ordinary to Louis XIV in 1676. He was ordained in 1681 and urged by his spiritual advisor, the Jesuit Father Le Valois, to take the post offered him by Bishop Laval of Quebec. Laval was the first Bishop of Quebec, having served the see for the first ten years of its episcopal life. In 1684, Laval decided to resign and advised Louis XIV that Saint-Vallier be seriously considered for the post. In 1685, Saint-Vallier was named the vicar-general of Laval, and three years later he was appointed bishop. He left for Quebec in 1685 and caused quite a whirlwind in his first eighteen months as vicar-general.<sup>150</sup>

Although officially titled the Vicar-General of Laval due to a delay in his consecration, Saint-Vallier exercised all the rights, privileges, and duties of a

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<sup>149</sup> For further secondary literature on Saint-Vallier's life and religious activities, refer to Cornelius Jaenen, *The Role of the Church in New France*, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976); Guy Plant, *Le Rigorisme au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Mgr de Saint-Vallier et le sacrement de pénitence* (Gembloux, 1971); Alfred Rambaud, "La vie orageuse et douloureuse de Mgr de Saint Saint-Vallier, deuxième évêque de Québec (1653-1727)" *Revue de l'Université Laval*, IX (1954) 90-108 and the somewhat outdated Amédée Gosselin, *Mgr. de Saint-Vallier et son temps* (Evreux: 1899).

<sup>150</sup> Alfred Rambaud, "La Croix de Chevrères de Saint-Vallier, Jean-Baptiste de, " in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. II, edited by David M. Mayne (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969) 329.

bishop. He constantly spent money, both his own and the see's, substantially depleting the seminary's accounts. During his first eighteen months, he undertook a tour of his parishes and outposts, visiting Quebec and Montreal, travelling the St. Lawrence, and exploring the dark woods of Acadia. He returned to Quebec in the fall of 1686 to a group of admiring but timorous clergy. Saint-Vallier's exuberance for his work frightened many, as did his alternate severity and extravagance.<sup>151</sup>

In 1688, he returned to Paris, where he was officially consecrated Bishop of Quebec. Despite protests from Laval and the clergy of Canada, who were troubled by Saint-Vallier's lack of tact and overabundance of enthusiasm, he was officially named to the title and sent back to his diocese that same year. In 1689, a year after becoming Bishop of Quebec, Saint-Vallier travelled to Newfoundland to visit his parishes, venturing to Plaisance and the Isles of Saint-Pierre.<sup>152</sup>

The precise working relationship between the bishop and the various religious organisations in New France was in dispute for a period. The seminary of Quebec had been established by Bishop Laval, who had accorded it many rights beyond the normal privileges, including a large amount of autonomy and certain of the rights of a religious order. Saint-Vallier found it difficult to establish his control over the religious of New France and essentially lacked the

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<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Rambaud, "Saint -Saint-Vallier," 330.

necessary tact and self-restraint with which to deal with his ecclesiastics. The combined effect of the bishop's lavish spending and lack of consideration created a rift between Saint-Vallier and his clerics. The secular clergy of New France fell beneath the auspices of the seminary, which was affiliated with the Séminaire des Missions Etrangères of Paris. The overall effect was one of a distinct polarisation of the entire clerical body of New France and Saint-Vallier.<sup>153</sup>

His control over the various religious orders in New France was similarly strained. In actual fact, the orders such as the Récollets were primarily answerable to their superiors in France, although all missionary work in New France was co-ordinated through the Propaganda, of which Saint-Vallier was a member.<sup>154</sup> The bishop was not their monastic superior, but rather their missionary control and a helper and ally with whom they were supposed to work in New France. During the years 1685 to 1691 Saint-Vallier was preoccupied with asserting his authority over the secular clergy.<sup>155</sup>

It is possible that his decision to install a mission in Plaisance was influenced by his dissatisfaction with the secular clergy in New France. Until that time, Plaisance had been entirely ministered to by almoners unaffiliated with any particular order. The result had predictably been inconsistent service and a distinct lack of religious continuity. It would have been impossible for Saint-

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<sup>153</sup> Rambaud, "Saint-Vallier," 329-330.

<sup>154</sup> Luca Codignola, *Guide to documents*.

Vallier not to have heard of the problems faced by the community of Plaisance due to the sporadic and sometimes iniquitous presence of a priest in the community. Complaints were voiced by the inhabitants which must have made him well-aware of the problems caused by Governor Parat and his personal almoner,<sup>156</sup> which likely confirmed his estimation that a permanent missionary establishment was needed in the colony.

While he did not have the right to order the Récollets in Quebec to establish a mission in Plaisance, he could certainly ask for their services. At this point in his career, he had not yet managed to fully antagonise the Récollet superior in either France or Quebec.<sup>157</sup> His request for religious as made to the superior in Quebec was therefore granted. The three Récollets chosen to accompany Saint-Vallier to Plaisance and to establish a mission there were dedicated, well-educated and of unquestionable moral scruples.

Saint-Vallier's intention to better equip the community of Plaisance religiously is indicated in a document issued by the crown on 24 March 1688, ordering a ship's captain to transport the religious sent by Saint-Vallier to

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<sup>155</sup> Rambaud, "Saint-Vallier," 330.

<sup>156</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-185v.

<sup>157</sup> He had, however, had disagreements with Séraphin Georgemé over the right to conduct public funerals, a dispute in which St.-Saint-Vallier referred to the disobedience of the Récollets under Georgemé. Matters were apparently cleared up within a year, as there appears to have been little dispute over whether the Récollets would undertake the mission instigated by St.-Saint-Vallier. René Bacon, "Père Séraphin Georgemé" in Odoric Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 466-467.

Newfoundland.<sup>158</sup> Two portions of this form are left blank, namely the name of the captain and the name of his ship. This form indicates that Saint-Vallier had procured permission to bring some religious to Newfoundland for the service of the people there. It also demonstrates that his plans had not yet been confirmed as he did not know which ship they would sail upon. His intentions to send religious to Newfoundland were, however, clear enough at this point that he wished to carry through with the paperwork.

On 23 April 1689, Bishop Saint-Vallier communicated with the superior of the convent of *Notre-Dame des Anges* in Quebec. He wrote to Séraphin Georgemé, who was then both the superior of the convent and the provincial commissioner for the Récollets of Canada.<sup>159</sup> The letter also addressed those Récollets chosen for the mission to Plaisance. The letter declared the bishop's intent to visit Plaisance and his decision to add the Récollets to his voyage and labours, as he wished the Récollets to set up a hospice or convent in the town of Plaisance. Saint-Vallier noted that the authorisation of the bishop and the king were needed for such an establishment and accorded them "pleinement et irrévocablement toute permission devant émaner de l'évêque."<sup>160</sup> In this document, the Récollets were given permission to construct a hospice or convent

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<sup>158</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 15, 273. See Appendix A.37.

<sup>159</sup> Bacon, "Père Séraphin Georgemé," 466; Rouen, ADSM - 46 H - Récollets, liasse 5.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

in the village from the donations of pious benefactors and to live according to the rules of their order. They were also given, for the duration of their stay, the village chapel, complete with sacramental vases and vestments. The condition attached to these grants was that the Recollects of *Notre-Dame des Anges* continue to provide pastoral care to the inhabitants of the area and that they maintain a religious body of at least one person approved by the Bishop or his vicars.

There is an interesting passage in this letter, in which Saint-Vallier assigned the parish of Plaisance to the Saint-Denis Récollets,

Enfin, désirant vous venir en aide dans une oeuvre si utile au salut des âmes, nous avons décrété de confier et donner à votre Ordre ladite paroisse de Plaisance érigée déjà ou encore à ériger par nous. Jusqu'ici la desserte de cette paroisse n'avait pas encore été confiée à un pasteur stable, car ni mon illustre prédécesseur ni nous, n'en avions établi en ce lieu. C'est pourquoi, par les présentes, autant qu'il est en notre pouvoir et moyennant l'autorisation du St.Siège, nous confions et unissons à votre Ordre et déclarons confiée et unie ladite paroisse de Plaisance...<sup>161</sup>

In this passage, there appears to be some confusion as to whether or not Plaisance was actually already a parish. The parish was to be conferred upon the Récollets, but Saint-Vallier was not certain whether the parish was already

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<sup>161</sup> AAQ, Registre A. Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec à Seraphin Georgemé, Gardien du Couvent des Récollets de Notre-Dame des Anges près Québec. Le 22, avril, 1689.



erected or if it had yet to be created and he must do so. Neither he nor his predecessor had paid much attention to the religious life in the community and had not conferred the service of it upon a reliable pastor. As this is the first mention of the parish of Plaisance and Saint-Pierre, it is likely that this document indicates the time at which it was established.

The letter of Saint-Vallier also mentioned that the permission of the French king was necessary to the establishment of the Plaisance mission.<sup>162</sup> Such permission was granted the Récollets, but not until March of 1692, when King Louis XIV issued a proclamation regarding various missions in Canada.<sup>163</sup> In his letter, Louis granted permission to the Récollets to continue with their established missions in various locations, including Plaisance. He advised that they were to provide pastoral care to the inhabitants as well as to serve as almoners to his troops. Financial indemnity was granted the Récollets by the king, with the former being exempt from paying taxes, mortgages, or any other fees to either the king or his successors.<sup>164</sup>

The grants by king and bishop overlapped somewhat, but contained certain elements which were quite disparate. Firstly, the king was obviously concerned with the spiritual well-being and morale of his troops as well as that

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<sup>162</sup> "Mais, comme pour l'érection d'un tel hospice ou couvent vous avez besoin de la permission et du roi et de l'évêque, permission que, du reste, vous demandes humblement..." *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> NA, Colonies, Series C11A. vol. 125, 201-202v. See Appendix A.15.

of the inhabitants. Saint-Vallier's letter did not even mention the military aspects of colonial life, focusing on the inhabitants of the parish as a whole. This distinction reflected the different spheres in which the two men worked and perhaps indicated a differing definition of inhabitant, with Saint-Vallier including all of the people under the one term and the king making a distinction between soldiers and citizens.

The soldiers of the fort in Plaisance lived apart from the population, actually residing in the fort's barracks. These barracks were across the water from the rest of the habitations, requiring either priest or soldier to ford the water for the satisfaction of their respective religious duties.<sup>165</sup> In actual fact, the Récollets had been asked to assume religious responsibility for the garrison and had only accepted on the condition that they be paid more than the 100 *écus* normally granted the holder of that position.<sup>166</sup>

A diagram dating to sometime prior to 1692 shows a plan of Plaisance, in which a church is located within the fort.<sup>167</sup> This "Old Fort", as it was called, was used until the raid of 1690, which necessitated a new fort, Fort Louis, being built

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<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> In a letter complaining of the Récollets, Governor Parat reports that, "il me semble qu'il est rude de ne point avoir d'aumonier au fort car ils sont logés à la grave pour leur commodité et il nous faut passer l'eau". AN, Series C11A, vol. 3, 66-72.

<sup>166</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 161.

on the beach at Plaisance.<sup>168</sup> The presence of this church or chapel is geographically logical in that it negates the necessity for travel on the part of all the troops. It is also explanatory, as it makes clearer precisely what is being argued by Parat when he states that it would be better to have two seculars, one in the town and one in the chaplaincy of the fort. The fort's chapel was likely only used by the soldiers and officers, being less accessible to the people of the town. The religious segregation of town and barracks was likely enforced by the governors, who often saw the needs of the soldiers as more important than those of the inhabitants. Parat's protests of inconvenience demonstrated that he was unused to a stable religious presence in the town, possibly indicating that the chaplains previously serving Plaisance were generally occupied with the fort.

The community church lay within the community on the beach, and it is likely that the Récollets wished to maintain close proximity to the church which had been assigned to them as a pastoral duty by Saint-Vallier. While they unquestionably held jurisdiction over the fort chapel which lay within their parish, they appear to have initially occupied themselves more with the townsfolk than the barracks. The dichotomy between the interests of the king and those of the bishop were most apparent in these early days, when the direct supervision of the bishop made his position more keenly felt.

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<sup>167</sup> Plan de la Rade et du Port de Plaisance en l'isle de Terre Neuve. See Appendix C, Figure 1.

<sup>168</sup> Jean-Pierre Proulx, *Histoire militaire*, 26, 34.

Neither king nor bishop mentioned any direct funding for the religious endeavours of the Récollets, although both granted rights and privileges which were financially advantageous. Saint-Vallier's letter was much more specific than that of the king and addressed specific concerns relevant to the establishment of a convent or hospice. The bishop penned his *lettre patente* five months before he helped set up the monastery and expressed his interest in the organisational details for the forthcoming enterprise. The letter of the king was written some three years later and served primarily to confirm what the bishop had already ascertained. It was therefore preoccupied with mentioning those areas of concern to the monarch, such as the military.

Another document, dated to 17 March 1692 provides an account of what transpired during a dinner between Saint-Vallier and the French king. Included in this document are notes concerning the king's intentions with regards to various missions, among those the parishes of Plaisance and Saint Pierre.

...que le Roy nous ordonnoit d'envoier cette année bon nombre de Religieux en Canada... qu'il avoit fait escrire à Mr. l'intendant pour faire passer gratuitement dans les vaisseaux ceux des Religieux qui n'y servoient pas d'aumonsnier selon l'ordre du Roy qui porte que chaque capitaine doit defraïer un prestre comme aumosnier du vaisseau...Sa Majesté estoit persuadé que les Récolets sont les seuls qui portent veritablement les interests de Dieu & de la Religion en Canada & qu'elle avoit plus de confiance en nous qu'en tous autres... qu'elle nous ordonnoit de fournir des Religieux aux isles de Plaisance & de St

Pierre, qu'ils y trouveront leurs subsistance & que l'on  
fourniroit au reste pour l'établissement... <sup>169</sup>

It appears that over dinner, the king was prepared to admit more to Saint-Vallier than he would commit to in a signed contract. Whereas the *Lettres Patentes* contained little information about either the current state of any of the Récollet missions or the economic commitment on the part of the crown, this account provided a certain degree of clarification in these areas.

This record of a dinnertime parlay was the account of a third party, a man named de Lagny who was also a Franciscan. A certain degree of caution must therefore be exercised in extracting the factual details from this letter. Along with the caution regarding the personage who penned the document, a degree of prudence must be measured in dealing with the words of statesmen and kings. Comments in which the king's favour are mentioned, for instance, may not be relied upon heavily as long-standing facts. Favour fluctuated with daily occurrence in political life. During the time of this letter, the Jesuits were not well thought of by the French crown, so it would be fair to say, for instance, that by contrast to this other missionary group, the Récollets were in favour. In essence, a reasonable display of diplomacy was likely in effect, both during the dinner and within the letter.

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<sup>169</sup> Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 239.

### 3.6 The First Franciscans in Plaisance.

The first Récollets in Plaisance were intriguing and important figures in the history of religion in New France. Joseph Denis and Xiste Le Tac were significant figures in French-Canadian history as well as important individuals personae in the religious life in Plaisance. While there were certainly other Récollets in the history of Plaisance who possessed an equal depth and breadth of learning, few were as experienced in the missionary work of New France as was Joseph Denis. Few missionaries to New France can also claim the mantle of authorship as easily, and possibly as erroneously, as Xiste Le Tac.<sup>170</sup> Le Tac and Denis, along with Didache Pelletier, the lay-brother who many historians claim accompanied them, but whose presence in Plaisance is ambiguous, at best, formed the nucleus around which the established Church grew in French Newfoundland.

#### 3.6.1 Joseph Denis

Joseph Denis was born Jacques Denis, son of Pierre Denis de la Ronde and Catherine Leneuf de la Potherie. Born in Trois-Rivieres on 6 November 1657, he entered the Petit Seminaire de Quebec on 21 August 1669 at 11 years of age. Eight years later, on 9 May 1677, he took the habit with the Récollets of

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<sup>170</sup> The *Histoire chronologique*, historically attributed to Xiste Le Tac, is now commonly believed to have been written by another author by virtue of its style and chronology. For a further discussion of this, see René Bacon, "Père Xiste Le Tac," in Odoric Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 633-634.

Quebec.<sup>171</sup> He was the first to complete the newly-established noviciate of Notre-Dame des Anges. He then went to France for theological studies, although precise information regarding his activities during his studies is lacking. After completion in 1682, he returned to Canada to engage in missionary work with the Récollets of Saint-Denis.<sup>172</sup>

Within two years after his return to New France, Denis was assigned to the mission of Ile Percée along with Didache Pelletier.<sup>173</sup> There he engaged in the construction of a church or chapel and the reform of religious practices within the community.<sup>174</sup> During this time, he earned the gratitude and admiration of Bishop Saint-Vallier. When Saint-Vallier announced his intentions to visit

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<sup>171</sup> René Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis de la Ronde," in Odoric Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 320. Joseph Denis is one of the most-celebrated Récollets in the history of Récollet missions in New France. As is the custom for such cases, scholars have subjected Denis' life to repeated scrutiny and publication. Such sources include the afore-mentioned work in the *Dictionnaire biographique*, pages 320-345, as well as Hugolin Lemay, *Le père Joseph Denis, premier récollet canadien (1657-1736)*. 2 volumes, (Quebec: Imprimerie Laflamme, 1926); Hugolin Lemay, "Les Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis et ceux de la Province de Bretagne à l'Ile Royale, de 1713 à 1731," In *Mémoires de la Société Royale du Canada I* (1930): 77-113, and Hugolin Lemay, *L'établissement des Récollets à l'île Percée (1673-1690)* (Quebec: [s.n.], 1912). Also, see Jacques Valois, "Denys, Joseph," In *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. II, ed. David M. Mayne, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969).

<sup>172</sup> Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis," 320.

<sup>173</sup> Odoric Jouve, *Le Frère Didache Pelletier, Récollet*, (Québec: Couvent des SS. Stigmates, 1910), 146.

<sup>174</sup> Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis," 322.

Newfoundland and to establish a mission there, Joseph Denis was among those selected to accompany him.

Having already had experience in a small, remote fishing community as well as having succeeded in reviving its religious life, Denis was a logical choice for the Plaisance mission. Whether such a task was his choice or an assignation by his superior is difficult to say. It is possible that, given Denis' history in the Percée parish, Saint-Vallier specifically requested that he be assigned to the Plaisance mission. Saint-Vallier was fully knowledgeable of the troubles brewing in Plaisance with regards to governor Parat and the general climate of malaise created by the immoral practices of governor and chaplain. It is quite probable that Saint-Vallier judged Denis capable of standing his ground against the governor. It is also likely that Denis' ability to get along with the citizens in Percée and to relate well to them spoke on his behalf, as Plaisance's community had undoubtedly become somewhat cynical of clergy after the ministrations of Morin. Whether Saint-Vallier specifically requested Joseph Denis or whether the judgement came from the superior, Séraphin Georgemé, is not recorded. What can be concluded is that the opinions of both agreed on the fact that Denis was capable and well-suited to the labours required in improving the religious situation in Plaisance.



### 3.6.2 Xiste Le Tac

The other Récollet friar appointed to the Plaisance parish with Joseph Denis was Xiste or Sixte Le Tac, native of Rouen. He was born *circa* 1650 and made his profession to the Récollets of Saint-Denis eighteen years later.<sup>175</sup> In June of 1678, he left France for Canada along with the Provincial Commissioner of Saint-Denis, Potentien Ozon, and two lay-brothers.<sup>176</sup> His missionary endeavours carried him to Bourg-Royal, near Quebec, from whence he travelled to Trois-Rivières, Nicolet, the Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Rivière-du-Loup, Gentilly, Bécancour and Rivière Saint-François.<sup>177</sup> According to the *Histoire chronologique*, Le Tac returned to Quebec, residing at Notre-Dame des Anges and serving as master of novices and director of the Third Order of St. Francis.<sup>178</sup>

In 1689, having been selected or volunteered for the mission to Plaisance, he travelled with Saint-Vallier, Joseph Denis and Didache Pelletier to Newfoundland. Le Tac was approximately forty-nine years old when he arrived in Newfoundland, had served in a wide array of communities and had acted in a

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<sup>175</sup> *Nécrologe*, fol. 4.

<sup>176</sup> René Bacon, "Père Xiste (Sixte) Le Tac," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 629.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 630; Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 227, 229. Further biographical information regarding Xiste Le Tac can be found in Chrétien LeClerq, *Premier établissement de la foy dans la Nouvelle France*, 2 volumes, (Paris: Chez Amable Auroy, 1691); Odoric Jouve, *Les Franciscains Aux Trois-Rivières*, (Paris: s.n., 1934).

supervisory role in the monastery of Notre-Dame des Anges.<sup>179</sup> His appointment to the hospice in Plaisance was likely due to his combined maturity and experience.

### 3.6.3 Didache Pelletier

Claude Pelletier was born in France on 28 July 1657 of parents Georges Pelletier and Catherine Vanier. He was baptised soon after birth by André Richard, a Jesuit priest, and confirmed by Bishop Laval in 1666. Pelletier was apparently quite devoted to the Church and ecclesiastical functions from his youth, as documents record that he acted as a godfather in 1671 and 1674,<sup>180</sup> and was paid eight pounds in 1676 for services rendered to the Church. On the same occasion as having been given eight pounds, he was also presented with a book, possibly indicating his literacy. Bacon postulates that in 1676, being eighteen year of age, Pelletier was likely learning his trade as a carpenter and may even have been engaged in the construction of the chapel of Sainte-Anne.<sup>181</sup>

He entered the convent of Notre-Dame des Anges as a postulant in 1678 and received the habit as a lay brother from the newly-formed noviciate of said

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<sup>179</sup> Bacon, "Père Xiste Le Tac," 631.

<sup>180</sup> Odoric Jouve, *Le Frère Didache*, p. 106-107 and 112; René Bacon, "Frère Didache Pelletier" in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 763.

<sup>181</sup> Bacon, "Didache Pelletier," 763.

monastery in 1679. According to the biography written of him by Joseph Denis, Pelletier spent four years at Notre-Dame des Anges followed by several years of study in France. Denis' *histoire* also mentions that he was selected for the Plaisance mission due to his great potential and religious capacity.<sup>182</sup>

Didache Pelletier and Joseph Denis are reported to have served in many missions together, including those of Plaisance, Ile Percée and Montréal.<sup>183</sup> The names of these two Récollets have become intertwined by virtue of the work they did together and the biography of Pelletier written after his death by Joseph Denis. In actual fact, Frère Didache Pelletier is not specifically named in any primary sources pertaining to Plaisance. His presence is rather extrapolated based on evidence from other sources. Firstly, Joseph Denis writes in his biography of Pelletier that the two of them "travaillé ensemble à tous les établissements du Canada."<sup>184</sup> In various Plaisance records, it is mentioned that first three and later two Récollets remained in the convent.<sup>185</sup> There is no real

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<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 764, citing Odoric Jouve, *Le Frère Didache*, 134-135 and Odoric Jouve, *Etudes historiques et critiques sur les Actes du Frère Didache Pelletier, récollet* (Québec: l'Evenement, 1911), 55. For further biographical information on Didache Pelletier, refer to Joseph Denis, "Actes du Très devot frère Didace Récollet mort en odeur de sainteté en 1699."; Odoric Jouve, "Le Frère Didace Pelletier, Franciscain, Documents dieppois," *Nova Francia*, vol. 4 (1929): 195-215; Odoric Jouve, *Le Frère Didace Pelletier, Récollet*, (Quebec: s.n., 1910).

<sup>183</sup> Bacon, "Didache Pelletier," 764.

<sup>184</sup> Lettre de Joseph Denis, 20 mai 1719, *CF*, 4 (1891): 254.

<sup>185</sup> Xiste Le Tac travelled to France a year after the mission was established to plead the case of the Récollets against the governor Parat to the ministry.

reason to doubt Joseph Denis' claim that the two served in Plaisance together, especially since his general claim holds up under an examination of the records in other missions to which the claim applies.<sup>186</sup>

After his death, Pelletier was presented by Bishop Saint-Vallier as a candidate for beatification, to which end Joseph Denis wrote an account of twenty-two miracles associated with his relics.<sup>187</sup> Among the miracles attributed to Pelletier was the healing of Bishop Saint-Vallier. Pelletier has not yet been canonised, however, and his case still lies buried in the annals of ecclesiastical documentation. Two portraits of this friar have survived, both dating to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.<sup>188</sup>

### 3.7 The Arrival

The arrival of the episcopal party in Plaisance is recorded by the governor of the community, Antoine Parat. On the 29 July 1689, Parat recorded that

M. L'Evêque de Québec est arrivé ici le 21 juin et un  
est parti le 21 du courant. Il m'a remis une lettre de  
cachet du Roi avec un ordre pour faire embarquer  
l'aumônier de ce lieu. Je l'exécuterai ponctuellement.

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<sup>186</sup> In the Ile Percée, Pelletier is recorded as having been a carpenter Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 216; Bacon, "Didache Pelletier," 765. M. de Belmont, superior of the Montreal Seminary, recorded having met Pelletier while the latter served with Denis in Montreal. "Actes du très devot Didache Pelletier, Récollet," *CF*, vol. 4 (1891): 281; Bacon, "Didache Pelletier," 766.

<sup>187</sup> Gowans, Alan, "Pelletier, Didace," *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 1, ed. David M. Mayne, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 536.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

Il a établi deux récollets pour *curé* et aumônier et m'a prié de vouloir payer à ces pères le reste des appointements de l'aumônier de la présente année, ce que j'ai fait d'abord quoique je n'aie pas de nouvelles s'ils ont été payés en France ou envoyés comme je m'étais donné l'honneur de vous le demander, mais il me semble qu'il est rude de ne point avoir d'aumônier au fort car ils se sont logés à la grave pour leur commodité et il nous faut passer l'eau.<sup>189</sup>

This letter was written five weeks after the arrival of the Récollets and approximately one week after the departure of Bishop Saint-Vallier. It appears from Parat's report that the bishop made a few significant alterations to the religious services in the town, changes which did not suit Parat's tastes. In discussing the Bishop, Parat immediately leapt upon the issue of the dismissal of the almoner of the fort. According to Parat, the Bishop's orders to send the almoner away were immediately enacted by the governor.<sup>190</sup> He then raised the issues of the salary of the almoner being given to the Récollets and the problem with the location of the Récollets' abode.

The quarrel between Parat and the Récollets was established during the episcopal visit, with Parat pitting himself on one side against the Bishop and

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<sup>189</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 112-114. Parat au ministre, le 29 juillet 1689.

<sup>190</sup> Parat gives a little more detail regarding the chaplain he sent back to France. Apparently the priest requested from Parat a certificate denoting the good conduct of the religious. Parat states that the chaplain had served for ten years, although it is unclear as to whether said priest served Plaisance, the governor, or both during that period. AN, Colonies, C11C, vol. 1, 184. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689.

Récollets Joseph Denis, Xiste Le Tac, and Didache Pelletier.<sup>191</sup> The bishop was in a position of power, having the authority with which to quell Parat's outbursts and ravings, but the Récollets had fewer rights of authority over the governor. Their job was made more difficult by their position; as religious they held much potential for ecclesiastical influence, but relatively little direct authority. Their power lay in their ability to appeal to higher authorities, such as the bishop or king, who supported the Récollets by virtue of the importance attached to their mission or by reasons of personal preference; the specific Récollets in Plaisance had better reputations for honesty and integrity than did the governor.

### 3.8 The Finances of the Plaisance Mission

A letter from Governor Parat indicated that the Récollets and the bishop arrived in Plaisance on 21 June 1689.<sup>192</sup> Also evident in this letter were certain problems Parat had with the Récollets and bishop, details of which can be gleaned primarily in looking at the complaints he made against the religious. Firstly, Parat's letter mentioned that the almoner of the fort was sent off and the Récollets were granted the money which would have been paid to the chaplain. Secondly, Parat complained that the Récollets took lodgings on the beach and

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<sup>191</sup> The essential reason for the battle between Parat and the Church was that the latter had succeeded in separating Parat from his mistress of several years. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 190. Pastour au ministre, le 8 septembre 1689.

<sup>192</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 112-114. Parat au ministre, le 29 juillet 1689.

therefore those at the fort had to travel across the water to avail themselves of religious services.

The fact must be extracted from the bitterness in this latter complaint. The issue of the salary of the former priest clearly rankled Parat, as did the pre-emptory way in which he was ordered to pay the Récollets. As he put it,

... une lettre de cachet du Roy avec un ordre pour faire embarquer l'aumosnier de ce lieu. Je l'executeray pontuellement. Il a etabli deux Recollés pour *Curé & Aumosnier* & m'a prié de vouloir payer à ces peres le reste des appointemens de l'aumosnier de la presente année ce que jay faict d'abord, quoy que je n'aye pas de nouvelles s'ils ont esté payés en France ou envoyés comme je m'étois donné l'honneur de vous demander.<sup>193</sup>

Not only was Parat's chaplain sent away, but Parat himself was reprimanded for having kept the wife of a colonist as his mistress. The tone of his letter was one of defensiveness; Parat was essentially complaining about the unjust way in which he was treated. He pointed out that the bishop ordered him to pay the Récollets, but that Parat had not been apprised as to whether or not the Franciscans were funded by France. Defensiveness and confusion abounded in Parat's writing; on the one hand he was forced to give up a lifestyle to which he had become accustomed while on the other he felt that he had insufficient knowledge of the entire situation.

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

Parat's confusion over the financial aspects of the Récollet establishment was actually well-founded, although the motives for his concerns were likely more personal than professional. The Récollet mission was not funded by the Bishop and, from description contained within the *lettres patentes*, appears not to have received any substantial help from either the convent in France or the French crown.

The initial statement of the Bishop in his letter to Georgemé specified that the Récollets were to build their monastery and subsist on "les ressources que vous fourniront de pieux bienfaiteurs."<sup>194</sup> It also granted permission for them to collect the tithe,

Nous désirons en outre que vous puissiez recevoir les  
aumônes du roi et les dons de personnes charitables,  
et nous vous accordons les dîmes et autres  
offrandes.<sup>195</sup>

That Parat had any previous knowledge of the economic structure of the Plaisance Récollet mission prior to the episcopal visit is dubious. It appears that while he likely had some forewarning of his and his chaplain's impending castigation for sexual misdeeds, he had little concrete warning of the bishop's visit and its intended purpose.

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<sup>194</sup> AAQ, Registre A. Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec à Seraphin Georgemé, Gardien du Couvent des Récollets de Notre-Dame des Anges près Québec, le 22, avril, 1689.



In Plaisance, as in the later community of Louisbourg, there was no tithe exacted from the populace. All resources gained from the population were gifts and often had to be supplemented by the alms of the king.<sup>196</sup> While the royal alms were a reasonably reliable source of income, funds from the other sources probably vacillated with the income of the inhabitants. The tithe was dependant upon the earnings of the colonists, meaning that in the case of a poor fishing year, the Récollets would suffer as much as the people. Alms or charitable donations were also dependant upon the economic situation of the community, as gifts to religious could only be made if there was something to give.

The Récollets were thus closely tied to the economic situation of those to whom they ministered. If the people had little to eat, the friars were in a similar circumstance. The charitable sources to which the Récollets had access were largely dependant upon the goodwill and resources of the colonists.

It is difficult to estimate the average annual income of the Récollets in Plaisance. During the period of June through September in 1689, they were able

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<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> Most of the information about the lack of tithes in Plaisance and the alternate form through which the Récollets were supported comes from the documentation surrounding the establishment of the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance in 1701. At that time, the governor was told to ensure the continuation of the accustomed gifts to the Récollets and the Récollets of Brittany requested additional funding, as they said it was not possible to subsist solely on these gifts. AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 23-3, 21-24. *Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terrebonne, et du Fort Louis de Plaisance.* See Appendix B.1.

to amass 600 livres, which they used to pay half of the cost of their conventual dwelling.<sup>197</sup> The source of this income is recorded as having been donations and alms from the populace. There is no mention of an increase in the pay allowance in the governor's budget during the early years of the mission, so it can be safely assumed that the Récollets received the money allocated for one chaplain, to the amount of 300 *livres*.<sup>198</sup> This said, Parat claimed in a letter that the Récollets were more expensive than the secular clergy and that the community would be better off with the latter, both in terms of cost and convenience, as one would be able to serve the fort.<sup>199</sup>

### 3.9 Location of the Residence

The second complaint of Parat in his letter dated 29 July 1689 was that the Récollets stayed on the beach, away from the fort, a situation which inconvenienced Parat and, he claims, the soldiers. The purchase of the house in which the Récollets established their hospice was not effected until 7 September 1689. The first two and a half months of their mission were therefore spent with a less stable residential foundation. There are several alternatives which might

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<sup>197</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

<sup>198</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 16-2, 223. See Appendix A.17.

<sup>199</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, Du fort de Plaisance le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

explain where they stayed during this period, including the possibilities that the Récollets were staying with an affluent inhabitant or were lodged in the church.

While the Récollets later lived on what was termed the “Petit Grave” they began their establishment in Plaisance on the Grand Grave.<sup>200</sup> The *Grand Grave*, or the large beach, was an area in which prominent fishermen set up their houses and stores, as is evidenced by the 1698 census.<sup>201</sup> There was a suitable drying place for large quantities of fish and easy access for most to the water. Such access was important both in terms of participation in the fishery and transportation. Pointe Verte was too remote to permit easy access to the colony as few people lived on that stretch of land. The Récollets likely spent their first months either in the church or with an inhabitant of the town in the area of the Grand Grave. There was no specific mention of them living in the church, although it was among the possessions granted to them by the bishop. Equally, there was no mention of them residing with an inhabitant. It is certain, however, that they were not staying in the house of the governor, whose duty and privilege it ought to have been to entertain visitors or clergy. Undoubtedly, had they stayed with him, Parat would have complained of the extra cost of feeding the Franciscans and the inability of his dwelling to house so many. Parat's reputation

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<sup>200</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10. Recensement de toute la colonie établie en liste de Terre-Neuve et Saint Pierre, le Grand Plaisance et la première coullonne, l'île de Terre-Neuve pour l'année 1694.

<sup>201</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

and open hostility may also have dissuaded the friars and bishop from availing themselves of his hospitality, his den of iniquity not being all that appealing to pious monks.

### 3.10 The Purchase of Property

Little is known of the advanced preparations made by or for the Récollets with regards to accommodations in Plaisance. The first documentation of their habitation is Parat's afore-mentioned complaint. The next primary source relevant to the Récollet establishment in Plaisance is the contract of sale between Pastour de Costebelle , syndic for the Récollets in Plaisance, and a Sieur Jougla.<sup>202</sup> The property purchased by the Récollets in 1689 was to remain in Franciscan hands for only three years before being sold to another inhabitant. This property was also to be a bone of contention between the Récollets and inhabitants in later years.

The contract of sale between the Récollets and Sr. Jean George Jougla was signed on 7 September 1689 and ratified the next day by the governor.<sup>203</sup> Jougla,

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<sup>202</sup> Pastour records that the bishop appointed him syndic for the Récollets in Plaisance, primarily to facilitate the purchase of a property in which the friars might live. AN, Colonies, C11C, vol. 1, 212. Pastour au Ministre. A Plaisance, le 3 septembre, 1689.

<sup>203</sup> « Contrat passé pour l'acquisition d'un établissement des PP. Récollets à Plaisance » Le 7 septembre, 1689. A Plaisance. Transcribed from Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 236-237. See Appendix A.10.

an erstwhile inhabitant, was obliged to return to France due to an incompatibility between his health and the Newfoundland climate. As Parat reports in his epistle to the French Ministry,

....Quand aux Pères, Ils ont achepté une habitation à  
la grand grave d'un habitant qui ne peut demeurer en  
ce pays pour y estre tousjours malade & quy s'en va en  
france<sup>204</sup>

The deed of sale to the Récollets describes the house as lying to the south of church, to the north of the widow Charpentier's property, to the east of the Gilbert land and to the west of the Zeimar properties.<sup>205</sup> As no further documentary evidence exists as to the relative location of these properties to others, it is difficult to extrapolate any further positioning from this account. However, by beginning with the description appearing in the 1698 census, in which the positioning of said property and the others in the community are described in some detail, further understanding of its location is possible.

The 1698 census description describes the property of a Pierre Courtiau, which he purchased from the Récollet Superior in 1692.<sup>206</sup> The location of the

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<sup>204</sup>AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189.

<sup>205</sup> « Contrat passé pour l'acquisition d'un établissement des PP. Récollets à Plaisance » Transcribed from Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 236-237. See Appendix A.10.

<sup>206</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

property is to the south-east of the lands of Ambroise Bertrand and to the north-west of the property of François Vrignauld. A diagram of the relative locations of the houses in Plaisance in 1698 can be reconstructed from the descriptions in this census.<sup>207</sup> The precise measurements of the property sold by Jougla are not given in the 1689 deed of sale and it is impossible to say whether or not the dimensions of the property bought by the Récollets in 1689 and that bought from the Récollets by Courtiau in 1692 are the same. There are several buildings mentioned in the 1689 contract, including a *cabane* or hut in which the hired fishermen lived during the summers in which they worked on the boats.<sup>208</sup> The main house is listed as being *gisant* or giant.

The cost of the house and property is recorded by Parat at 1200 *livres*, verifying the amount recorded in the contract of sale. Further information regarding the specifics of payment are also presented in this letter, in which half of the total cost is recorded as having been paid by the Récollets from charitable donations received that year. The implication appears to be that the donations came from members of the Plaisance colony.

Parat's description of the cost and contents of the property includes four boats, a specific not mentioned in the official contract.

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<sup>207</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 4 and AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>208</sup> The French term "cabane" is likely an adaptation of the Basques "cabanos", which connotes a more stable and permanent structure than the English "cabin". Barkham, "The Documentary Evidence," 61.

Il leur couste 1200l. cabanes, grave & eschafaut &  
pour 4 chaloupes de pecherie. Ils en ont payé environ  
la moitié des charités qu'ils ont receu cette année.<sup>209</sup>

The four *chaloupes* mentioned by Parat do not appear in any form in the original contract. It is possible that Parat was mistaken and that, although the *chaloupes* were part of the property of Jouglu, they were not sold with the rest of the estate. It is equally possible, yet not so probable, that they were included under another heading and sold as a part of the flake, for instance. Said flake, used for drying fish, was indeed listed in the contract of sale between Jouglu and the Récollet fathers. In the illustration of Plaisance dating to 1690,<sup>210</sup> the structures identified as flakes appear to bear more resemblance to constructions typically called stages, in which a small hut used for storage is connected with the wharf and fish-drying area. No doubt there were fishing vessels as an integral part of the property when Jouglu owned it, especially as there were lodgings for the fishermen. It made little sense for Jouglu to have accommodations for his hired fishermen and no boats from which they might fish. The fact that neither the fishing vessels nor the stage should be mentioned in a deed of sale is odd,

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<sup>209</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 186-189. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

<sup>210</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 3. "Plane de Lanclos de Plaisance"

especially given their worth and the fact that the oil press as an item specifically related to the fishery is mentioned.

Two equally probable explanations remain, either that the vessels were included under the heading of *Eschaffault* or "flake or stage", or that they were disposed of in some other fashion. As no census data in which Sr. Jougla is mentioned have survived, is difficult to trace his fishing activities and possessions through time. He does not appear in the censuses of 1671 or 1673, neither of which are particularly detailed in any case. Nor does any subsequent census mention the acquisition of fishing boats from Jougla by an inhabitant.

The question of whether or not the Récollets owned or made use of fishing boats remains open to discussion. There are two primary sources which indicate that the fishery might have played an important role in the maintenance of the Récollet community of Plaisance, namely the above mention of *chaloupes* and a letter dated to 1692. The letter, written by a Monsieur De Lagny, describes the French king's perspective on the religious life of New France, with specific reference to Plaisance. In this letter, de Lagny mentioned that

Le discours retombat sur Plaisance, qu'il dit que si nous avions là des gens intelligentes ils pourroient deffraïer le poisson d'une partie de la province, que le poisson ne s'y vendoit six livres le quintal & que le Roy nous donneroit saue les quatorze farns de drois par quintal, que l'on pourroit avoir le port gratis.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 239.



This passage seems to imply that the Récollets engaged in the fish trade by acquiring fish from one location in which it cost little and selling it to the king for a greater value. Whether or not the Récollets of Saint-Denis actually fished themselves is a matter of conjecture. They probably did not, given the paucity of their numbers and the wide array of services that they had to provide. Travelling between the outlying communities was time-consuming, as was tending the spiritual needs of the soldiers and inhabitants in the town of Plaisance. If the chaloupes were indeed used for profit by the friars, hired workers were probably employed. Thus far no further documentary evidence has come to light regarding the fishing activities of the first Récollets in Plaisance.

The land and buildings purchased by Pastour de Costebelle in 1689 for the Récollets remained in the hands of the order for only three years.<sup>212</sup> It is recorded in the census of 1698 that in 1692, Pierre Courtiau purchased the property from the superior of the Récollets for the sum of 1000 livres. The sale of the property corresponds with the departure of the two remaining Récollets, Joseph Denis and

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<sup>212</sup> The Sr. de Costebelle involved in the Récollet establishment's early days was Louis Pastour de Costebelle, older brother of Philippe Pastour de Costebelle who accompanied D'Iberville on his campaigns and became governor of Plaisance and Ile Royale respectively. Louis was one of the three de Costebelle brothers who became involved in the military defence of New France. He served as lieutenant commander of the fort until 1692, when he was replaced by his brother, Philippe. Georges C. Salagnac, "Pastour de Costebelle, Philippe," *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 2, ed. David M. Mayne, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 509-510.

Didache Pelletier, who were estimated to have left during the summer of in 1692.<sup>213</sup>

Using the census description of 1698, it is possible to reconstruct the general layout of properties in the community, thereby providing a basic ordering of the colonists by virtue of the position of their lands. After plotting the plan of properties, it becomes evident that those conducting the censuses simply started at one end of the beach and made their way from house to house in an orderly fashion. While the end of the beach from which the census-taker began might vary, the order remained fairly consistent. Determining an individual's movement within the community can be done through examining his positioning in a census list relative to that of other inhabitants in the list. The census on 1694 reported a "Courtiaux" living between Philippe Zemars and Pierre Carerot, followed from northwest to southeast by François Vrigno and Jean Milly. This corresponds with the order of the census of 1698, in which the property owned by Courtiau was that purchased from the Récollets in 1692.

The deed of sale of 1689 further recounts details as to the relative location of the Récollet residence and property, stating that the church lay to its north. This, of course, made the Jougla land ideally suited to the purposes of the Récollets. It also facilitates locating the church in the plotting of the

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<sup>213</sup> Further discussion of these events can be found in Chapter Four of this thesis.

community.<sup>214</sup> In 1689, the church and Récollet lands were adjacent and lay side-by-side with the properties of the governor and some of the wealthiest fishermen in Plaisance.<sup>215</sup> They lived in the midst of such notables as Zemard and Gilbert, whose hired crews were among the largest in the community and whose property the most valued. Indeed, the governor himself paid tribute to the value of the property purchased by the Récollets, as he mentioned that their location on the beach was a choice one, and that their occupying it inconvenienced him in his bid to attract new settlers.<sup>216</sup> The governor's property lay alongside that of the friars, and access to his stage necessitated passing through their lands. It is possible that his claim to impeded access was valid and that such an enclosure would have significantly obstructed public access. On the other hand, his complaint could simply be yet another symptom of the ongoing power struggle between the governor and the Franciscans.

The property passed permanently into the hands of Courtiau around 1692 and his move was sufficiently permanent that he was given a *brevet* or grant

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<sup>214</sup> See Appendix C, Figures 4 and 5.

<sup>215</sup> New churches seem to have been built in Plaisance from time to time, although determining the precise chronology of them is quite difficult. In his complaint of the location chosen by the Récollets, Parat states that if they had been located on the extremity of the beach, as he wished, they would have had enough land on which to build their church. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189, le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

<sup>216</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

from the king of France for the property in 1696, indicating that he and the secular authorities considered it to be his house and that he was a permanent resident.<sup>217</sup>

### 3.11 Reactions of Secular Authorities.

The mercurial attitudes of Governor Parat towards religious life in the community contrast starkly with the level-headed perspective of the lieutenant commander of the fort, Louis Pastour de Costebelle. Whereas Parat quarrelled with everyone with whom he had dealings, de Costebelle appears to have made his way through life on the opposite tack, antagonising few and helping many. The distinction between the relationships of the Récollets to these two men is obvious from the beginning of the missionary endeavour, at which time Parat antagonised the bishop and the friars while de Costebelle helped and defended them.

Je vous assure, monseigneur, que deux seculiers, un à la grave & l'autre au fort, il y aen avoit ce qu'il falloit, & mesme M. l'evesque n'a esté qu'un prestre à St. Pierre. Vous scavez que les Religieux ne sont jamais contents & qu'ils ont tousjours des pierres d'attente. Ils disent que ayant achepté la place, il est loisible à eux d'en faire à sa volonté, mais l'intheret du tiers sauve, & de la maniere qu'ils acheptent & payent il est facile d'acquérir.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12, 121. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>218</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

From the outset, Parat was opposed to the idea of a Récollet establishment and found reason to criticise the friars at every turn. As the above passage indicates, he would have preferred to have had two secular clerics in Plaisance. Were it not for the remainder of the passage, in which he launched an *ad hominem* attack on the Franciscans, the first statement could be taken as the logical argument of a man concerned with the well-being of his colonists. His persistence in criticizing the financial dealings of the Récollets as well as his tendency to view them as opportunistic somewhat distorts the validity of his opinion as to the practicality of their mission. The dispute was a highly personal one and appears to have been centred around the governor's autonomy within the community. The Récollets represented an educated and well-connected group backed by the larger church organisation. They held the authority of the bishop in certain matters and also represented a check placed upon the governor in matters of colonial control and financial independence.

The letter from Parat makes reference to the governor's disagreements with Xiste le Tac and the latter's trip to France. Parat assumes that one of the principal reasons for which Le Tac travelled to France was to complain of the conduct of the governor. In fact, he was partially correct in so reasoning, but the voyage of Le Tac was primarily aimed at delivering the papers of Saint-Vallier to the king and reporting on the situation in Plaisance, a situation with which Saint-Vallier had been obliged to deal insofar as he attempted to correct the

behaviour of the governor.<sup>219</sup> The tension between the Récollets and the governor was such that, after having apprised the monarch of the actions of the governor, Le Tac could not return to Plaisance for fear of increased instability within the community. For as long as Parat remained governor, Le Tac was essentially in exile.<sup>220</sup>

If the affair had simply been a quarrel between Récollet and governor or if it had been viewed as a case of the Bishop antagonising yet another individual, the situation might not have been taken so seriously by the crown. The case of the Récollets and the bishop against Parat was, however, bolstered by the testimony of Sr. de Costebelle in a letter he addressed to the Ministry dated to the 18th of September, 1689. De Costebelle attributed the hostility of Parat towards the Récollets and the Church in general to the conflict between Parat and the bishop over the governor's mistress. The hostility of the governor to de Costebelle he saw as being related to the issue of benches in the Church. The bishop had allowed Pastour to place a bench in the church.<sup>221</sup> In that period, being allowed to place a bench in the church was a prestigious symbol and the relative position of the bench to other benches and to the inhabitants was immensely important.

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<sup>219</sup> Gosselin, *Mgr de Saint-Vallier et son temps*, 64.

<sup>220</sup> Bacon, "Père Xiste Le Tac," 632.

<sup>221</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 190. Pastour au ministre, le 8 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.11.

In this case, the fact that de Costebelle was permitted to have a special place in the church angered the governor as it represented a sign of the bishop's favour towards the lieutenant. By contrast, Parat had recently been severely chastised by the bishop and reprimanded by the king. Regardless of how many people opposed his actions with his mistress, Parat chose to blame de Costebelle for the criticism levelled at him because of his adultery, most likely because he could not get away with blaming the bishop. In lieu of attacking the bishop outright, Parat appears to simply have set his mind to creating difficulties for the Récollets and de Costebelle. It stands to reason, therefore, that Parat would have caused as much interference as possible with regards to the financial practices of the Récollets, which involved both the friars and the Lieutenant Commander.

Louis de Costebelle left Plaisance in 1692, in the same year as his brother arrived to assume his position. In this same year, the Jougla property was sold by the Superior of the convent. There is no record of who assumed the position of financial representative for the Récollets of Plaisance or when precisely a new residence was purchased or constructed for the Récollets. Following the track of conjecture, it is possible to hypothesise that Philippe de Costebelle assumed the title of syndic once held by his brother. The younger de Costebelle moved into the same military position as his sibling and distinguished himself within the community in much the same fashion. During the years in which he served as governor of Plaisance, he supported the Récollets as harbingers of religious life within the colony. Alternatively, the duty of syndic might have fallen to the man

who succeeded Parat as governor, Joseph de Mombeton de Brouillan. De Brouillan had as much claim to the title, and seems to have supported the Récollet presence within the town, as indicated by his gift to the hospice of land for a cemetery.<sup>222</sup>

### 3.12 Conclusions

The episcopal visit of 1689 and subsequent establishment of a monastery in the French capital significantly altered the hierarchy and religious life of the Plaisance community. Initially, religious life was largely controlled by the governor and dependant upon the proclivities of the secular authorities and whatever priest happened to be in the community. The arrival of the bishop and Récollets saw the beginning of an institutionalized established religious system which lay outside of the jurisdiction of the secular leaders. The reaction of the governor to this change was not positive, as the newly-founded mission hampered the monopolising tendencies of the governor, providing a means of surveillance through which the governor could be held accountable for his actions. The Récollets assumed the spiritual authority of the colony, removing religion from the hands of the secular authorities and challenging the control of the governor. This latter change had the effect of stabilising religious life, in that

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<sup>222</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan, Gouverneur de Plaisance a fait aux Récollets d'un terrain pour augmenter leur résidence et faire un cimetière. Le 22 mars, 1695.



the whims of the governor no longer determined the type or availability of priests for the community. At the same time, however, the social life of the colony was in turmoil due to the conflict between the secular and religious leaders.

In Plaisance society, the arrival of the Récollets provided the organisation and means for the Church and the state to work hand in hand to ensure social order, although this ideal was not always achieved. The first Récollets, Joseph Denis, Xiste Le Tac and possibly Didache Pelletier encountered a set of problems which were to plague future Récollets sent to Plaisance. The problem of gaining sufficiently regular funding to support their expenses was accentuated by the system of donations through which they were expected to maintain their mission. Coupled with the issue of funding was the complication of providing religious services to the soldiers in the fortifications. In 1689, the fort lay across the water from the community necessitating extra arrangements on the part of soldiers and friars. This situation gave the governor further reason to criticise the friars for failure to provide adequate service and exacerbated the dispute between Parat and the Récollets.

The purchase of the Jouglas property on the Grand Grave appeared to establish the friars as a permanent presence within the colony and allied their mission with the influential personage of Louis de Costebelle, then commander of troops in the fort at Plaisance. De Costebelle acted as the syndicate for the friars in the purchase of the property and sided with them against Parat. His testimony

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strengthened that of the Récollets and eventually led to a ceasefire between religious and secular authorities, with Parat apparently being content to bide his time until his relief from the position of governor.

**Chapter Four**  
**The Politics of Rebellion and**  
**the Departure of Joseph Denis and Xiste Le Tac**

**4.1 Introduction**

The year 1690 saw several events significant to the Récollets residing in Plaisance. It was during the preceding fall that Xiste Le Tac travelled to France as envoy of Bishop Saint-Vallier, thereby reducing the Récollet population of Plaisance by a third. The colony was sacked by English raiders during February of 1690 and rebuilt during the summer of that same year. In August of 1690, Father Joseph Denis was called upon to guide the colony through a period of severe economic and religious turmoil as well as to prevent mutiny during the Basque sedition. Sources illustrating the development of religious life in the community demonstrate the integral nature of religion in coping with internal conflict and military attacks on the community.

**4.2 Le Tac's Return to France in 1689**

Riding the crest of the overwhelming popularity of their initial establishment, the Récollets pushed forward and made their grievances with the governor known both within the community and without. In 1689, Xiste Le Tac travelled to France as the envoy of Bishop Saint-Vallier, his mission being to carry letters from the Bishop to the royal officials at Versailles and to report on the religious and political climate of Plaisance.

Historians have generalised about Le Tac's principal purpose in travelling to Versailles in one of two fashions; either they see him as having travelled primarily to convey the letters of the Bishop or they portray his interests as having been to present the Récollets' side of the conflict in Plaisance.<sup>223</sup> Either perspective largely reflects the historian's sympathies, attitudes, and focus, as those who examined the colony's religious life tended to accentuate the personal conflict.<sup>224</sup> By contrast, articles such as those in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, interested primarily in the politics or economy of French Newfoundland, have downplayed the tensions between the Récollets and Parat, concentrating on the political roles of the friars.

Historical reality was likely a combination of both factors. Bishop Saint-Vallier's visit to Plaisance lasted approximately one month, during which time Saint-Vallier and the governor quarrelled over the issue of Parat's mistress, the terms of the Récollet establishment, the provision of a ship by the governor for the bishop in which the latter might survey the condition of the islands of St.

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<sup>220</sup> The articles in *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography* which deal with the Récollets take the former side, while Hugolin Lemay, in his monograph entitled, *L'Etablissement des Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis à Plaisance en l'Île de Terre-Neuve*, 1689, 13, and Briffett, "A History of the French in Newfoundland Previous to 1714," 90, writing about the history of Plaisance adopted the latter perspective.

<sup>224</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets...à Plaisance* and Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*.

Pierre, and the acquisition of an English vessel.<sup>225</sup> At least some of the letters written by the bishop and conveyed to the king at Versailles by Le Tac detailed the problems in the Plaisance community. Undoubtedly the bishop and the Récollets discussed the difficulties with which they had to deal. It is likely that both the letters from the Bishop and the words communicated by Le Tac to the French ministry contained similar elements. While the episcopal correspondence probably discussed some of the events surrounding the bishop's visit, Le Tac's filled in the events which had transpired after Saint-Vallier left.

The tension between the friars and the governor does not appear to have eased at all in the weeks subsequent to the Bishop's departure from Newfoundland. The Récollets' relationship with the Bishop has not been recorded in any detail, but a passage in one of the colonial letters indicates that there was some discontent on the part of the Récollets and their relationship with the Bishop during his stay.<sup>226</sup> Whether or not the Récollets got along well with Saint-Vallier, they needed him in the face of the conflicts between friars and governor. Saint-Vallier had succeeded in deeply antagonising Parat towards the religious establishment, hostility which was directed at both bishop and Franciscans. With the departure of the bishop, life in Plaisance became virtually intolerable for the

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<sup>225</sup> See Chapter Three of this thesis.

<sup>226</sup> "Après le départ de M. l'Evêque avec lequel les Récollets ne vivent pas bien..." AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 167. Résumé de Sr. Parat. Chronologie de matières diocèses etc. Le 4 septembre, 1689.

friars, resulting in the superior, Le Tac, travelling to France to make the situation known.

The Gallican church in New France was, by its very formation, both religious and political. In one sense, its various divisions were responsible for providing the religious and social services necessary to the communities in which they served while in another, they were obliged to report on the actions of the secular authorities.<sup>227</sup> In much the same way, the secular authorities were to indicate the actions of the religious to the French ministries.<sup>228</sup> The respective duties of both are spelled out quite clearly in documents from that period. An oath dating from 1672, which was required of all members of the clergy, stated

Vous jurez et promettre à Dieu de travailler de tout  
vostre pouvoir au maintien de la Religion Catholique,  
Apostolique et Romaine, de l'avancer autant que  
vous le pourrez par vos exemples et vos soins, par le  
pureté de vostre doctrine et la publication de  
l'Evangile, et d'estre fidèle au Roy comme vous estes  
obligé sous l'autorité de la charge qu'il vous a faict  
l'honneur de vous donner dans ces provinces. Vous  
promettez, en outre, que s'il vient quelque chose à  
vostre cognoissance qui soyt contre le service de Sa  
Majesté, vous nous en donniez advis, et, en cas qu'il  
n'y fust pas par nous rémédié, vous informerez Sa  
Majesté.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 35.

<sup>228</sup> Jaenen, *The Role of the Church*, 47.

<sup>229</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1, 226.

The Récollets had long served as internal surveyors, or less tactfully, spies, on behalf of the government and king. They were often placed in positions in which they might both provide information regarding the actions of secular officials and exert a moderating influence on these men, although always with the knowledge that in the alliance between Church and state, the state held the upper hand.<sup>230</sup> While members of the secular clergy were also used in a like fashion, their allegiance was often less well-defined. The Récollets and other members of orders were regulated internally and were accountable to their order, church and government. Secular clerics, on the other hand, were less accountable for their actions than were friars, a situation which often resulted in conspiracy between governor and priest, as occurred between Governor Parat and the priest Morin. Rather than each balancing the other's influence within the community, the governor and the priest merged their vices and supported each other's dissolute lifestyles. <sup>231</sup> The establishment of the Récollets in Plaisance provided a group which had a reputation for well-trained and hard-working friars who were capable of providing a good example to the community. Initially, at least, their morality was not questioned and the visit of the bishop of Quebec to Plaisance can be seen as a testimony to the importance of the mission established in Newfoundland.

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<sup>230</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 35-36.

<sup>231</sup> See Chapter Three of this thesis.

Le Tac's visit to France was alluded to in two letters, one by the notorious governor of the colony and the other by Pastour de Costebelle. Parat's letter dated 4 September and de Costebelle's to the eighteenth of the same month. The governor identified Le Tac and said that the Récollet would go to France, as he stated, "Le Père Sixte s'en va en France. Il vous dira que j'ay faict beaucoup de difficulté....".<sup>232</sup> De Costebelle did not mention Le Tac by name, but he did stipulate that the Superior of the mission would be seen by those to whom the lieutenant commander wrote, "...ainsi que vous l'apprendrez par le Supérieur que vous verrez a Versailles".<sup>233</sup>

There is every indication that Le Tac's trip to France was to be a permanent return and not just a brief sojourn in which to report on the state of the colony.<sup>234</sup> His departure has been estimated as being sometime during the month of September in 1689.<sup>235</sup> Le Tac was never to return to New France and for all practical purposes abandoned his position as Superior of the Plaisance convent. The superiors of the order also gave orders that the other Récollet remaining in Plaisance, Joseph Denis, was to abandon the mission at the first

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<sup>232</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689.

<sup>233</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 190. M. Pastour au ministre, le 8 septembre 1689. It is, in fact, from this letter that scholars have learned that Le Tac was the Superior of the mission.

<sup>234</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 167. Résumé de Sr. Parat. Chronologie de matières dioceses etc. Le 4 septembre, 1689.



opportunity and to sell the house they had acquired.<sup>236</sup> This evidence substantiates the claims made by Odoric Jouve and Hugolin Lemay, who argued that the main reason for Le Tac's failure to return to Plaisance was the continuance of Parat as governor of the colony.<sup>237</sup> After having made his report at Versailles, Le Tac eventually made his way to his native town of Rouen, where he entered the Récollet convent, there to remain until his death in 1718.<sup>238</sup>

While this explanation of why Le Tac did not return to Plaisance appears credible, given the tension between Le Tac and Parat, it does not justify the failure on the part of Le Tac to return to another part of New France. Parat's personality kept the friar from returning to Plaisance, but there is no indication as to what dissuaded him from adopting another missionary endeavour. The *Nécrologe* and *Mortuologe des Recolets* make no mention of any severe illnesses, nor is any further mention made of him until his death at the age of sixty-five. It seems likely, therefore, that he either wished to return to his homeland for his twilight years or that his superiors or the crown had plans for him that entailed his staying in France. Without further documentation, it is difficult to state precisely why Le Tac did not return to New France or even if he planned to,

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<sup>235</sup> René Bacon, "Père Xiste Le Tac," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 632.

<sup>236</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 167. Résumé de Sr. Parat. Chronologie de matières dioceses etc.. Le 4 septembre, 1689.

<sup>237</sup> René Bacon, "Père Xiste Le Tac," *Dictionnaire biographique*, 632; Hugolin Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets...à Plaisance*, 13.

having left in 1689. It is quite possible that his mission to Plaisance was to be his last.

When Le Tac returned to France, the order was given for Denis to follow his superior as soon as possible.<sup>239</sup> It appears, however, that Joseph Denis was unable to make arrangements for the disposal of the property and to leave for France that fall. Upon Le Tac's departure, Denis seems to have begun the process of selling the property, only to have met with staunch opposition from the governor. Parat believed that rather than the house being sold by the Récollets, it ought to have been reclaimed by the Crown. His feelings were that a future chaplain might occupy it while serving the colony.<sup>240</sup> The official response to this request on the part of the governor was not recorded, although it can be guessed given the available data. The house later ended up in the hands of Pierre Courtiau, who reputedly purchased it from the Récollets in approximately 1692.<sup>241</sup> While Parat almost certainly attempted to prevent Denis from selling

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<sup>238</sup> *Nécrologe*, fol. 51v.

<sup>239</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, p. 167. *Resumé de Sr. Parat. Chronologie de matières diocèses etc.. Le 4 septembre, 1689.*

<sup>240</sup> "Si Mgr. Ne trouve pas à propos de souffrir cette vente, il aura la bonté, s'il lui plait, de donner ordre afin que cette maison soit remise à un aumônier pour se loger..." AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, p. 167. *Resumé de Sr. Parat. Chronologie de matières diocèses etc. Le 4 septembre, 1689.*

<sup>241</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. *Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.*

the house, it was likely the course of events during the winter of 1690 and summer of that same year which significantly delayed the friar's departure.

Following Le Tac's return to France, the situation in Plaisance was dramatically changed, politically, religiously and economically. In 1690, the town and the Old Fort were sacked by English privateers,<sup>242</sup> after which arose a struggle between the governor and the Basques present in Plaisance. In both of these situations, the Récollets played an integral part, consolidating the townspeople and preventing bloodshed. As no mention is made of a Récollet having been sent to replace Le Tac, it can only be assumed that Denis was working by himself in the mission, with the possible assistance of Didache Pelletier. In the events which followed, Denis was the only religious mentioned as having played a role in the Plaisance community. If the sources paint an accurate picture, he was solely responsible for a mission which spanned several communities, many of them isolated. In addition, he served as military chaplain for the soldiers in Plaisance and St. Pierre. A *caveat* is necessary in making such a claim, however. Not all of the sources that might have been useful in depicting the religious life of the community during that period have survived. Parish records, for instance, do not exist for Plaisance. Further, much of the

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<sup>242</sup> The French term used is "forban", which can translate to mean pirate or privateer. The sense of the word is, of course, entirely dependant upon the perspective of the writer. The French would be more likely to term the English pirates, while the English may have been privateers, or literally, legalised pirates bearing letters of marque from the English crown.

correspondence between the Récollets of Plaisance and those of Quebec and France has either been destroyed or has not yet surfaced to be available to scholars. What remains, therefore, is a piecemeal account, gleaned from colonial records and the available letters of the religious.

#### 4.3 The Events of 1690

One of the few surviving letters of those written by the Récollets while in Plaisance presents a forlorn plea to the crown on behalf of the colonists of the town.<sup>243</sup> This letter of Denis, written in August of 1690, was penned in response to the skirmishes which occurred in Plaisance during the previous winter, in which the community was attacked by English and subsequently shaken internally by what was to become known as the "Basque Sedition". During the summer of 1689, Governor Parat had become rather careless in his associations with the English. According to de Costebelle, Parat was advised by France of the possibility of a raid by the English.<sup>244</sup> For a variety of reasons, including among them cheaper and more readily available sources for certain goods, Parat appears to have ignored the French government and to have actively engaged in trade with English ships from New England.<sup>245</sup> The laxity of Parat's dealings

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<sup>243</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

<sup>244</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 301.

<sup>245</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 15-16.

came to a fore when he invited several Englishmen to tour the town of Plaisance.<sup>246</sup> By their own accounts, they had been hunting in St. Mary's Bay. Parat did not hesitate to let them into the community, whereupon they went from house to house visiting. Upon their departure, Parat provided them with powder and shot and sent them on their way.<sup>247</sup>

The Englishmen were happy to take advantage of such an opening as was provided to them, and very probably took notes on the town's defences. Despite words of caution, Parat was apparently not at all alarmed by the presence of the English within the town and saw no reason to fear attack from these men. Popular opinion held that his good faith was sorely misplaced, however, as many thought that these English had gained information which was later used to sack Plaisance during the winter of 1690.<sup>248</sup>

While it is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the vagaries of relations between the French and English as far as trade is concerned, it is important to note certain particulars of the events of 1690. The most thorough account of the English raid and subsequent Basque uprising is provided by Robert LeBlant in his monograph entitled *Une sédition basque a Terre-Neuve en*

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<sup>246</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 301. "Pastour avisa Parat que ces Anglois estoient des espions."

<sup>247</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol. 54, 301.

<sup>248</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 10.

1690.<sup>249</sup> Although somewhat dated and thus possibly negligent of all available sources, this work lays out quite clearly the events which transpired. Le Blant appears to be rather biased in favour of the Basques, as is evidenced by his assertions early on in the essay that the Basques alone were responsible for the discovery of Newfoundland, and must be treated with caution.<sup>250</sup> At any rate, Le Blant's work stands, to date, as the only work dealing in particular with the 1690 attack and uprising.

On 25 February, 1690, Plaisance was attacked by English pirates who disabled the cannon, carried off captives, and tortured Governor Parat.<sup>251</sup> The English were able to overthrow the town with astonishing rapidity for a variety of reasons. Plaisance's defences were quite weak due to a lack of maintenance and dismal morale among the troops. The English were able to capture the fort, such as it was, rapidly and captured the governor while he was still in his bed. Parat's excessive enthusiasm in welcoming the English into Plaisance during the

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<sup>249</sup> Le Blant, "Une sédition basque."

<sup>250</sup> This point remains to be determined and has been examined to distraction by scholars of all ethnic backgrounds. Basque scholars include Le Blant (pg. 3), who actually echoes the opinions of D. Cleibac contained in the three-part Series entitled *Us et Costumes de la Mer*, (Bourdeaux: Guillaume Millanges, 1647) B.N. F. 11582, 151. Portuguese historians claim precedence for Portugal, as do researchers of Brittany and Normandy claim similar distinctions for their geographical areas. For a more complete undertaking of the question of early Basques in Newfoundland, the reader is referred to Barkham, "The Documentary Evidence," 53-96; Barkham, *The Basque Coast of Newfoundland*; Barkham, "Aperçu de l'évolution,".

<sup>251</sup> Le Blant, "Une sédition basque," 9.

preceding year was cast back at him by his captors, who accused him of being a traitor.<sup>252</sup>

The internal division between the governor and lieutenant commander of the forces created dissension within the town's organised defences. Thus when the morning of the attack came, the governor and the lieutenant were not sufficiently prepared to unite in a combined effort to defend the colony. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the French colonists were taken completely by surprise and did not have the wherewithal or training to defend themselves when the troops could not.

Whatever the case, it appears that it was during this attack that the entire community was enclosed within the church for the six weeks as mentioned by Joseph Denis.<sup>253</sup> The pirates and raiders who participated in the attack against the French appear to have been a mixed lot, with some being English and others renegade Frenchmen.<sup>254</sup> Denis mentions that as well as having looted everything from the town, the pirates locked the community within the church for six weeks. Apparently, the English were against this idea, wishing simply to kill

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<sup>252</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F 3, vol. 54, f. 301. "...les Anglois l'ayant fait prisonnier luy dirent qu'il estoit traître à sa patrie..."

<sup>253</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

<sup>254</sup> The letter of Joseph Denis mentions that some were English while others were from the ships of Saint-Malo, in France. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

everyone except the women, whom they desired to carry off with them.

According to Denis, the pirates were not able to realise their wishes.<sup>255</sup> The precise implications of this statement are unclear, but it would seem reasonable to conclude that the pirates did not kill all that they had hoped to dispose of, or else there would have been nobody to spend the six weeks in the church.

Further, they probably were not able to carry off as many of the women as they would have liked, for Denis, as a man chiefly concerned with the morality of the community, would have mentioned more about the fate of these women at the hands of the raiders.<sup>256</sup>

Denis' task during the time of the attack was to maintain the community morale and to console those entrapped, or in their minds, entombed, within the church during the cruelest part of winter. That he sympathised with their plight seems obvious, given his heartfelt pleading. The reasons for his letter are obvious, as he clearly desired to communicate the situation within the devastated community and plead for aid in restoring the fortifications and the personal accommodations of the citizens. Also, as a watchdog on behalf of the crown,

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<sup>255</sup> "...Dieu qui ne veut pas la mort du pécheur n'a par permis que les forbans fussent de leur sentiment!" AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

<sup>256</sup> That the inhabitants were not harmed significantly is corroborated by the account rendered to Queen Anne of England by William Phipps. He states that no harm was done to the inhabitants. In this instance, French and English sources harmonise, probably indicating that there is substantial truth to the story. *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1, 506.



Denis was responsible for reporting any adverse happenings within the community to the French Ministry of the Marine.

#### 4.4 The Basque Sedition

The events within Plaisance during the winter and spring of 1690 preceded yet another catastrophe within the colony, that of the Basque sedition which occurred as a direct result of attempts to rebuild the community with the help and supplies provided by Basque fishermen. The desolation of the colony was discovered in that same spring by fishermen, among them Basques from Bayonne, Saint Jean-de-Lutz and Ciboure.<sup>257</sup> When precisely this was can only be postulated, as can whether or not it was actually Basques who made the discovery. The early fishing fleet from Europe uncovered the situation in Plaisance in the early spring, and Basque fishermen were among those who donated supplies to rebuild the community and to enable it to survive until further aid could arrive from France. It should be noted that the Basques had a vested interest in seeing that Plaisance survived, as they used its services and beaches for their fishing enterprises. Further, they were not particularly desirous of having the community continuously pillaged, especially while they were present. Thus making Plaisance defensible was in the best interests of all those who fished there and processed their catches on her beaches.

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<sup>257</sup> Le Blant, "Une sédition basque," 9.

The supplies donated by the Basques were food and munitions, as well as active participation in the securing of the harbour against further incursions.<sup>258</sup> Apparently the governor was not entirely enamoured with the role of the Basques and felt that they should give more freely of their supplies. In particular, Parat wanted nails and men with which to rebuild the fortifications.<sup>259</sup> These supplies were refused by the Basques which, according to Le Blant, led in turn to a polarisation of the soldiers and inhabitants on one end and the Basques on the other. A few of the inhabitants were from Basque territories, a factor which may have led them to sympathise with their compatriots.<sup>260</sup> In fact, it is unlikely that the situation was as neatly divided as Le Blant mentions, given the general disillusionment of the general population with the governor and the camaraderie of many of the inhabitants with the Basque fishermen. Whatever the case, the Basques and the governor's troops fell into opposing factions over supplies. In reality, the battle appears to have been more concerned with power and authority within the community, as the Basques, who greatly outnumbered the

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<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698; also AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 9, 1693. Recensement<sup>t</sup> De toute La collonie Establie en l'isle de Terreneuve Et saint pierre, Le Grand Plaisance Et La premiere coullonn, pour l'anné 1693, and AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 2, 1673. Rolle des noms et des surnoms aages des habitants de Plaisance que j'ay donné soubz le commandement de Mr. de la Poiepe Gouverneur le huit Sept.<sup>bre</sup>, 1673.

troops of the governor, appeared to have resented the dictatorial manner in which the governor commandeered their supplies and personnel.

A skirmish arose, in which the disgruntled Basques revolted against the governor and his troops on 20 August, 1690. Five days later, a letter from de Costebelle delineated the circumstances as they were viewed from his perspective.<sup>261</sup> The letter names six ships' masters as responsible for the uprising. De Costebelle states that the Basques took advantage of the fact that his own men were not armed within the town.<sup>262</sup> The Basques apparently routinely insulted the French soldiers in the Basque language. A small fracas between a soldier and a Basque master mariner brought matters to a head, resulting in an exchange of blows and the Basque captain suffering a head injury. Matters quickly escalated when Parat appeared to do nothing about the matter, even when faced with the forceful complaints of the group of Basque captains who assembled at his door. Threats were uttered and matters left unresolved until a Basque sailor insulted a young woman, whose brother immediately leapt to her defence. The lad was hurt in the scuffle, which would have ended with the arrival of Parat and his armed forces if the Basques had not immediately returned to their ships for weapons.

Tempers flared as the Basques kidnapped an inhabitant's son, thereby challenging the ability of Parat to do anything to stop them. The account states

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<sup>261</sup> AN, Colonies Series F 3, 54, 297.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*

that it was the intervention of Joseph Denis which prevented deaths and further bloodshed. <sup>263</sup> Denis' intervention somehow dissuaded the Basque captain from pushing his bid for control any further. Denis was thereby able to prevent further escalation of the conflict. A letter by de Costebelle also described Denis' role in defraying full-scale battle and bloodshed, stating that

...il auroit pris en praisance de M. le gouverneur... le fils dudit habitant, et l'ayant traisné par les cheveux dans sa chaloupe il l'auroit mené à son bord en menaçant M. le gouverneur de faire pandre le fils de cet habitant, sur quoy M. le gouverneur m'ayant envoyer chercher par des soldats avec le père Joseph, missionnaire et grand vicaire de Monsieur l'Evesque de Québec pour estre tesmoin de ce qui se passoit, je trouvay encore à mon arrivée ledit d'Arnadel à terre avec tout son monde armé...en voulant à tout moment sauter sur nous, pour nous tuer, en estant empêchés par le Révérend père Joseph et autres personnes...<sup>264</sup>

Parat's letter describing the turn of events was similar, as he remarked that

Comme il envoya à bord, j'envoya chercher M. Pastour et le Père Joseph pour estre tesmoing d'une telle sédition et comme ledit sieur Pastour estoit avec moy dans le corps de garde, et le père taché de pacifier ses séditieux...<sup>265</sup>

While markedly similar in content, the accounts provided slightly different perspectives on the role played by Denis during the Basque uprising.

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<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>264</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 142v. De Costebelle au ministre, le 30 août 1690.

<sup>265</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1. Parat au ministre, août 1690.

The first account stated that Father Joseph intervened and prevented deaths or at the very least, grave injuries. From other accounts, however, a young soldier was quite severely injured in the fray.<sup>266</sup> What was implied, therefore was that Denis prevented both the harming of the governor and commander as well as full-scale slaughter of the inhabitants. Denis was called onto the scene when the Basques tried to take the captured youngster aboard their ship. Both the account of de Costebelle and that of Parat stated that he was called to act as witness to whatever followed. The governor was concerned that Denis, as a literate and upstanding member of the community, should witness what transpired that he might present an account of events, should such an account be necessary.<sup>267</sup> It does not appear, from the phrasing of the letters, that Father Joseph was expected to alter the course of events in the way he did.

Precisely what the Récollet father did during the revolt varies somewhat from account to account. The general report stated that Denis intervened in a fashion that significantly lessened the amount of bloodshed.<sup>268</sup> De Costebelle

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<sup>266</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, f. 142v. De Costebelle au ministre, le 30 août 1690.

<sup>267</sup> As literate and upstanding members of the community, the Franciscans were often called upon to witness contracts or events. Another such case was that of Patrice René, Superior of the Plaisance mission in 1698, who witnessed a contract on board a ship at St. Pierre. His situation is addressed in Chapter Five of this thesis.

<sup>268</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F 3, 54, 297.

credited him with having saved the lives of himself and Parat, although precisely how was not mentioned.<sup>269</sup> The letter of Parat was somewhat more detailed, stating that the Récollet was occupied with pacifying the insurrectors.<sup>270</sup> Precisely how he managed to do this was not described in detail.

Denis' afore-mentioned letter describing the hardships suffered by the inhabitants of Plaisance hinted at the course of events more obliquely than did the words of the secular leaders. Denis wrote eight days after the Basque sedition. In his letter he alluded to the fact that the governor was traveling to France to explain the situation and made oblique reference to his own actions during the attack on Parat and de Costebelle.

Pour ce qui est de la manière dont les choses sont arrivées, non plus que d'autres désordres qui se sont passés ici, permettez-moi, Monseigneur, de me taire sur ce sujet, ne croyant pas qu'il soit permis à un pauvre religieux de Saint-François d'en prendre connaissance que pour y mettre la paix, et sil ne le peut, d'en gémir devant Dieu et de lui offrir sans cesse ses voeux et sacrifice, afin qu'il vous inspire, Monseigneur, le remède nécessaire à tout ce que vous apprendrez par la personne de M. le Gouverneur qui a cru être obligé de s'en aller pour vous le faire connaître.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 142v. De Costebelle au ministre, le 30 août 1690.

<sup>270</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1. Parat au ministre, août 1690.

<sup>271</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

Modesty seemed to prevent Denis from elaborating on the events in which he played such a significant role. His actions appear to have prevented the murder of yet another governor of Plaisance due to uprising within the community.<sup>272</sup>

Four days after Denis penned his letter to the French crown and ministry, Pastour de Costebelle wrote the ministry regarding the situation surrounding the Récollets in Plaisance stating,

... je me vois obligé de vous instruire de plusieurs particularités et principalement de la nécessité qu'il y a pour la gloire de Dieu et le salut de plusieurs âmes qui ont vécu jusqu'à présent dans un grand aveuglement du christianisme de soutenir l'établissement des pères Récollets que Monsieur l'Evêque de Québec a mis en ce pays missionnaires. Vous ne suariez croire, Monsieigneur, le bien que cela ferait s'il y avait le nombre de trois ou quatre religieux à cause de l'éloignement de plusieurs habitants qui vivent pires que des Sauvages si on ne les va chercher pous les instruire.<sup>273</sup>

If Denis was hesitant in requesting more Récollets for Plaisance and the surrounding areas, de Costebelle had no qualms about doing so. The above letter clearly demonstrates that de Costebelle perceived a need for Récollets in Plaisance. Whether this excerpt indicates that more Récollets were needed to add to the current number to make a total of three or four, or whether it

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<sup>272</sup> It must be remembered that the du Perron brothers were killed in 1662-63 in an uprising within the colony. Cf. Chapter Two of this thesis.

<sup>273</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 150-151. De Costebelle au ministre, le 1 septembre 1690.

demonstrates that there were no friars living in the community and that three or four were needed cannot be ascertained due to the lack of documentary evidence.

#### 4.5 The Departure of Joseph Denis

After the letter written by Denis in August of 1690, there was no further specific mention of his presence in Plaisance. Between 28 August, 1690 and 14 April, 1692, Joseph Denis effectively vanished from the documentary record of New France. His epistle to Louis XIV of France, dated to 28 August, 1690, was labeled as having been written in Plaisance and can be accepted as establishing that he was indeed in Newfoundland in the summer of 1690.<sup>274</sup> Nothing further is mentioned of his location or actions until April 14, 1692, when the parish records at Cap-Sainté indicate that he officiated at a baptism.<sup>275</sup>

Both Jouve and Lemay accept that Denis left Plaisance shortly after having penned his letter to the king and that he returned to Quebec sometime during September 1690.<sup>276</sup> The basis for this supposition revolves around a somewhat suspect secondary source and yet another English attack on Plaisance, this time

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<sup>274</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141v. F. Joseph Denis, Récollet. De Plaisance, le 28 aoust 1690. Appendix A.12.

<sup>275</sup> René Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis (de la Ronde)," *Dictionnaire biographique*, 327, footnote 610.

<sup>276</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, 18; Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis," 326.



led by Sir William Phipps during the month of October, 1690. The theory of Lemay and Jouve is that if Denis had remained during the attack, either he would have recorded his experiences or his presence would have been mentioned by other sources.<sup>277</sup>

In reality, even Lemay admits that nothing is known of Joseph Denis' precise location between the years 1690 and 1692.<sup>278</sup> The compilation of Jouve's researches on Denis yield nothing further regarding his activities between his last letter from Plaisance and his appearance in Cap-Sainté.<sup>279</sup> It is as realistic to suppose that Denis and Pelletier, if indeed the latter accompanied the former, left sometime during 1692 as during 1690.

During 1690, in the autumn following the sacking of the town and the abandonment of the colony by her governor, de Costebelle effected the construction of a rudimentary fort on the beach, designed primarily to protect the colonists. The church in which the colonists had been enclosed was within this construct, as is visible from a plan drawn by de Costebelle to delineate his attempts at protecting the colony from further incursions.<sup>280</sup> The winter following the Basque sedition was undoubtedly a difficult one, but it must have been somewhat easier than the six-week ordeal of being shut into the church.

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<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>278</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, 18.

<sup>279</sup> Bacon, "Père Joseph Denis," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 326.

<sup>280</sup> "Plan de Lanclos de Plaisance." See Appendix C, Figure 3.

There is no record of correspondence from or to any Récollets or priests in Plaisance during the winter of 1690-91, nor is there any notice as to whether or not Denis left.

At the same time, documentary evidence suggests that the presence of religious guidance within the community was sorely missed.<sup>281</sup> De Costebelle was experiencing many of the same problems with colonists as did Parat before him. Blasphemy and adherence to a religion other than the Roman Catholic faith were matters of great importance to de Costebelle in the letter above, both in terms of their potential for disturbing the social order of the colony and the military risks that such deviance carried. This condition persisted, as is evidenced in a report by de Costebelle, in which he reiterated that it would be in the best interests of the colony if the number of Récollets were increased such that they might continue the labours begun by their predecessors and that in the absence of such guidance, the people of French Newfoundland were living, “pire que les sauvages”.<sup>282</sup>

In one particular case, he was obliged to deal with a unrepentant Englishman and his wife who persisted in violating basic tenets of the Roman Catholic faith through “blasphemy,” working on proscribed days, and failing to

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<sup>281</sup> AN, Series F, 132-1, vol. 1, 171. A Plaisance, le 5 octobre, 1690. See Appendix A - 13.

<sup>282</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 235. Copie des Mémoires présentés à M. de Pontchartrain pour Plaisance, par le S. Pastour. 1691.

participate in the customary religious life.<sup>283</sup> De Costebelle's discussion of this specific religious problem is all the more striking given the fact that he did not mention having received any help from the Récollets in dealing with the colonist in question. In dealing with a situation so obviously integral to the stability of religious life in the community, it would have been logical for the Récollets to be consulted by the governor, especially in the case of a governor who so obviously supported the Récollet establishment.

There are several possibilities which might explain the lack of mention of Récollets in the letter. It is possible de Costebelle viewed the problem of the heretical and traitorous English settler as one of military importance and dealt with it himself. It is equally possible that, given the depleted number of friars in Plaisance and the remote location of the problematic Englishman in Petit Plaisance (modern-day Argentina), the Récollets were not equipped to deal with the issue and left its resolution to the governor. Finally, there remains the likelihood that there were no Récollets in the Plaisance parish who could deal with the affair. Which of these scenarios existed is impossible to say, given the lack of documentation.

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<sup>283</sup> AN, Colonies, Series F, 132-1, vol. 1, 171. A Plaisance, le 5 octobre, 1690. See Appendix A.13.

#### **4.6 Conclusions**

The first chapter of the mission of the Récollets to Plaisance closes as something of a failure with the hurried departure of its founding missionaries, leaving the colonists without adequate religious guidance and the interim secular leader with the duties of maintaining religious order in some fashion. The foundations upon which the mission of 1689 was established were not sufficiently constructed to sustain the Récollet community. The conflict between bishop and governor marred the relationship between the latter and the Récollet, creating a situation of tension which resulted in the two initial missionaries abandoning the hospice. The property acquired during this period appears also to have been of only temporary significance, having left the Récollets' hands soon after its purchase.

While the Récollets were unable to remain in Plaisance after the strife with Parat, they did set the stage for further development of the Plaisance mission. Further, the presence of Joseph Denis during the English raid and subsequent Basque sedition provided moral and spiritual support for the colonists during times of colonial instability, and probably prevented wholesale slaughter in the community. Their steadying effect on morale and morality within the Plaisance community was likely quite strong and their subsequent abandonment probably had a significant effect on both religious life and morale within the community. In the face of Parat's antagonism, Denis was certainly able to provide assistance to the colonists for a period and, perhaps, restrain Parat's tendencies towards

immoral self-indulgence. His absence and perhaps more significantly, the lack of an established church organization, gave colonists and leaders more freedom to commit religious transgressions than they had during the period in which there were Récollets in Plaisance.

Chapter Five  
War and Prosperity: The Récollet Mission from 1690 to 1701

5.1 Introduction

After the respective departures of Xiste Le Tac and Joseph Denis from Plaisance, the community was served by several other Récollets from the Province of Saint-Denis. The documentary evidence regarding most of these men is sparse, both in terms of amount and content. A few are known by name, while there are undoubtedly others whose identities have not yet been recognised. Some work has been done by recent scholars at rectifying the situation through the compilation, organisation and publication of the voluminous researches of Odoric-Marie Jouve. The *Dictionnaire biographique* consists primarily of individual entries on individuals, including many of those who served Plaisance during the years 1692 through to 1701.<sup>284</sup> The Récollets who ministered at Plaisance for the remainder of its attachment to the Province of Saint-Denis were embroiled in an entirely different set of circumstance from those experienced by the mission's founders. The community of Plaisance went through a period of growth, largely due to an improvement in the secular leadership, which extended past the turn of the century. Such notable figures as Baron Lahontan

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<sup>284</sup> This work also contains entries on several of the Récollets who served Plaisance from 1701 through to the move in 1714 to Ile Royale. For the most part, the entries on the Récollets of Saint-Denis (1689 to 1701) are more detailed, while those of the Récollets from Brittany (post 1701) are quite brief. Odoric Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique des Récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France*, edited by Archange Godbout, Hervé Blais and René Bacon (Quebec: Bellarmin, 1996).

and Pierre Le Moyne D'Iberville were influenced by, and in turn influenced, the Récollets of Plaisance. During this period also the dispute over the Récollet property played a central role in defining the relationship between the Récollets and the inhabitants.

## 5.2 Cosme Sigismond

Of the Récollets who served Plaisance between 1692 and 1701, Cosme Sigismond and Felix Pain are the only two Récollets identified by name in Jouve's *Dictionnaire*. Both of these men were from the Province of Saint-Denis.<sup>285</sup> Sigismond was thought to have served the Plaisance mission from 1692 to 1693 and Pain was believed to have followed in 1694, remaining until 1698.<sup>286</sup> While these two Franciscans have generally been assumed to have been the only identifiable Récollets in the colony during this period, there remains another friar who served the colony during two years as Superior and Vicar General. Patrice René, of Saint-Denis, was previously thought to have arrived in New France in 1703, whence he served as missionary in Acadian missions.<sup>287</sup> Evidence demonstrates that he was actually Superior of the Plaisance mission in 1698 and

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<sup>285</sup> Hervé Blais, "Répertoire des Récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, lxxviii, lxxx.

<sup>286</sup> René Bacon, "Père Cosme Sigismond," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 850; René Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 737.

served as Vicar General for Bishop Saint-Vallier during this time.<sup>288</sup> There is sufficient cause to believe that he was one of the last Récollets from Saint-Denis to have served the colony of Plaisance prior to the assumption of control by the Récollets of Brittany in 1701.

There is every reason to suppose that Cosme Sigismond was one of the Récollets intended to replace Joseph Denis. Precisely when he arrived is not recorded in any known source, although there are a number of oblique references which may allude to his arrival. The Pastoral Epistle, believed to have been written sometime around 1692, indicates that several Récollets had been sent to serve the people of Plaisance.<sup>289</sup> Further, a mention is made in 1692 of the two Récollets that had been sent in that year by the Bishop of Québec.<sup>290</sup> Lemay's estimate that the Plaisance mission was uninhabited from 1690 to 1692 appears overly strong.<sup>291</sup> While Saint-Vallier was certainly in France in 1691, recruiting

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<sup>287</sup> René Bacon, "Père Patrice René," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 823-24.

<sup>288</sup> France, Archives départementales de la Gironde, Amirauté de Guyenne. 6B Attribution judiciaires, vol. 1091. Bordeaux, le 3 novembre, 1698.

<sup>289</sup> Henri Têtu and C.-O. Gagnon, *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec*, vol. 1 (Quebec: s.n., 1887) 288. See Appendix A.14.

<sup>290</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 16, 206. A M. de Brouillant de Versailles, le 1 avril 1692. See Appendix A.16.

<sup>291</sup> Lemay argues this on the premise that Denis left in October of 1690 and that no other Récollet arrived in Plaisance until 1692, as is indicated by this Episcopal Letter. Hugolin Lemay, "*L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*," 18.



Récollets for his missions, such replenishing of the ecclesiastical stock does not indicate a complete dearth of religious in New France.

Sigismond was likely either among this group of new recruits or had preceded the bishop's recruiting drive by a year or so. There is no mention of his arrival, nor do any events appear to have been connected with his name. The first documentary evidence of his presence occurred after his departure in a letter from the Ministry of the Marine to Governor de Brouillan, in which he stated that, "Le Père Cosme Sigismond, Récollet, étant repassé en France, Sa Majesté a donné ordre à son Supérieur d'envoyer un autre Religieux à sa place".<sup>292</sup>

This letter, written March 10, 1694 seems to imply that Sigismond had left in 1693. Bacon's assessment that he departed sometime during the previous autumn appears reasonable, given the time necessary for letters and people to pass back and forth.<sup>293</sup> At the time this letter was written, an order had gone out that Sigismond be replaced, although no mention is made of any specific Récollet designated to replace him. Bacon hypothesizes that Felix Pain was the Récollet who replaced Sigismond in 1694, a supposition based principally on timing.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-1, 58. A Sr. du Broüillant, le 10 mars 1694. See Appendix A.21.

<sup>293</sup> Bacon, "Père Cosme Sigismond," 850.

<sup>294</sup> Bacon, "Père Cosme Sigismond," 850; Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737.

### 5.3 Patrice René

At its best, the Récollet mission in Plaisance had a Superior, at least one *curé*, a fort or garrison chaplain and, on occasion, other brothers who served the parish in whatever capacity was required of them. Of these, the garrison chaplains are the best documented, namely because they were in frequent contact with the secular authorities.<sup>295</sup> Surprisingly enough, the name of the Superior of the hospice during the time of the Récollets of Saint-Denis does not often appear in the colonial records, unless he was required to sign a contract, as in the case of René, or to mediate a dispute, as did Joseph Denis.<sup>296</sup> The little surviving information regarding René is primarily related to his later works in New France, specifically to his time in Ile Royale, but some data regarding his actions and significance in the Plaisance mission can be gleaned through an examination of documents which mention the Superior of the mission during the time René served in that capacity. René appears to have been superior during the

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<sup>295</sup> Not all of this documentation was of a complementary nature, as all too often the only mention of the fort chaplain was when he was committing a faux-pas of some sort. Félix Pain's conflict with both de Monic and de Costebelle provides illustration of this phenomenon and is described in this chapter, in the section entitled "The Chaplain in the Fort".

<sup>296</sup> The names of the superiors of the Récollets of Brittany, who served from 1701-1714, are recorded, however, in a Series of chapter records. The Récollets of Saint-Denis maintained similar records, delineating appointments and actions, but these records were lost when the Récollet archive and convent in Quebec burned in 1796. Hugolin Lemay, "The Friars Minor in French and British North America," *The Franciscan Educational Conference. Report of the Annual Meeting* 18 (1936) 154.

time that Félix Pain was in Plaisance, a combination which was maintained when both moved on to Ile Royale. In 1703, Patrice René emerged as Superior of the mission in Acadia, where once again he served with Félix Pain.<sup>297</sup>

Very little is known about Patrice René's early years in New France. He was born in 1667 in France, joined the Récollets of Saint-Denis in 1682 and made his profession the following year.<sup>298</sup> His ordination was probably in 1688, five years after he took his vows, as was the norm for Franciscans of that period.<sup>299</sup> According to Chaisson, René came to Canada in approximately 1690, and the first documentary evidence extant of his presence in New France is a baptismal document signed by him 30 June 1693, in Beaumont, close to Quebec.<sup>300</sup> Bacon and Jouve take issue with this statement, believing it to have been based on an erroneous interpretation of the documentary evidence available.<sup>301</sup> According to the research conducted by Jouve and his posthumous editors, René was not in new France prior to 1703, when he is recorded as

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<sup>297</sup> René Bacon, "Père Patrice René," 824.

<sup>298</sup> *Nécrologe*, fol. 43v.

<sup>299</sup> Bacon, "Père Patrice René," 823.

<sup>300</sup> Anselme Chaisson, "René, Patrice," *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, edited by David M. Mayne (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 552.

<sup>301</sup> Bacon, "Père Patrice René," 823, note 27.

having signed a register in Ile Royale as the *curé* of Port-Royal.<sup>302</sup> The following September, René is recorded as having signed the same registers as “*curé et supérieur de la mission*”.<sup>303</sup> Jouve speculated that René was one of the two Récollets who came over to New France aboard *L'Eléphant* in 1703.<sup>304</sup> This supposition appears to have been somewhat speculative, however, as information has emerged pertaining to a set of contracts signed by René while he was assigned to the Plaisance mission.

In 1698, two contracts related to the sale of a vessel by force were witnessed by Patrice René. The summary of the course of events as recorded in the archival holdings read as follows,

Déclaration, au sujet des forbans, de Pierre Vegeuyau(s), ci-devant maître de la Marie de Bordeaux, appartenant à Jean Saige, partide Québec pour la côte de Plaisance chargé de biscuit, farine, pois, planches de sapin. Le mauvais temps la obligé à s'arrêter à Saint-Pierre où il a trouvé la Anne-Marie de La Rochelle, capitaine Samuel Thomas, faisnant la pêche à la morue. A décidé de faire le négoce de ses marchandises, lui donnant leur vaisseau le Galant Filibuster En échange et l'ont forcé à signer une déclaration disant que tout s'est passé sans violence et signée entre autres par Patrice René(s), supérieur des

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<sup>302</sup> AN, Colonies, MG 9, B8, 24. Registres de Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Port-Royal.

<sup>303</sup> AN, Colonies, MG 9. B8, 24. Registres de Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Port-Royale.

<sup>304</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23, 249v. and AFM fonds Jouve, dossier “Patrice René”, pièces 2 et 15.

**Récollets de Québec dans les missions de Plaisance.  
Attestation de nullité de cette déclaration jointe.<sup>305</sup>**

Negotiations went awry between Pierre Vegeuyau and the merchants, with two contracts resulting. This first was a deed of exchange between the two men, while the second was a statement retracting the first contract. Patrice René witnessed both agreements. On October 7, 1698, his statement of witness read that he verified the terms of the contract in his capacity as superior of the mission and Vicar-General of the Bishop of Quebec.<sup>306</sup> The following day, René was called upon to witness the retraction of this deal. His statement of witness was largely the same the second time around, although there were some slight differences in wording which provide added information regarding René's position. As well as being the superior of the mission and Vicar-General of Plaisance and St. Pierre, his domain included the surrounding areas.<sup>307</sup>

This set of documents gives insight not only into the name and role of a Récollet of Plaisance, but also indicates something further as to his activities and social significance he held. Patrice René signed the above documents in St. Pierre. The first was signed on board the pirate or privateering ship, as was indicated by the second. In the first document, René was listed as the Superior and Vicar-

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<sup>305</sup> France. Archives Départementales de la Gironde, Amirauté de Guyenne. 6B Attribution judiciaires. Vol. 1091, 1698, nov. 3, Bordeaux.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*

General within the document's body. His realm of jurisdiction was written by him to be the missions of Plaisance and those of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.<sup>308</sup> In the second record, he was also listed as the Vicar-General and Superior, but his influence was specified as including "surrounding places". Further, the way in which he signed his titles in the signature portion of the contracts differ, as in the former, he signed himself as the superior of the mission, while in the latter he added his rank as Vicar-General. As René's witness to the second contract was more elaborate, it would seem that he was using the added weight of his rank as Vicar-General of the Bishop of Quebec to strengthen his assertion that the former contract was signed under threats of violence and that the latter should outweigh it.

While the vagaries of the contractual dealings surrounding the sale of the vessel the *Galant Filibuster* are quite interesting, more relevant for the purposes of understanding religion in the parish of Plaisance is the notion that the Superior of the mission should find himself in St. Pierre. The parish of Plaisance actually encompassed French Newfoundland, including throughout its history Baie de Fortune, St. Mary's, Petit Plaisance, Pointe-Verte, Isles Saint-Pierre,

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<sup>308</sup> Miquelon is not specifically mentioned, but is generally assumed to have been included under the auspices of "Iles St. Pierre".

Lissardie, Grand Banc, Havre Bertrand, l'Hermitage, and, of course, Plaisance.<sup>309</sup>

As the town of Plaisance was the capital of the region, the parish was named Plaisance. Responsibility for the parish of Plaisance incorporated a duty to the outlying regions of the colony, a charge which necessitated both a great deal of travelling and a greater number of clergy than population numbers would indicate. Bishop Saint-Vallier specified that the parish was to include the outlying French areas in his letter written to Séraphin Georgemé in 1689.<sup>310</sup>

While it was not unusual that any one of the Récollets should be found serving one of these areas, as was indeed their duty, it is interesting that the Superior of the mission took it upon himself to travel to the outlying regions. His presence in St. Pierre may be seen as a testament to the scope of the travels of these friars and also, perhaps, to the paucity of their numbers for such time-consuming and far-flung work. There is also the possibility that the Superior of the Plaisance mission made a regular circuit of the towns and villages served by the friars in his charge. Such hypotheses fall in the realm of speculation, however, given the lack of parish documentation with which to locate specific friars and draw patterns of their movements and actions.

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<sup>309</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets...à Plaisance*, 23 and AN, Colonies, Series G1, numero 19. Recensement Des habitants de plaisance pointe verte et petit plaisance et Isles St. pierre 1711.

<sup>310</sup> AAQ, Registre A. Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec à Seraphin Georgemé, Gardien du Couvent des Récollets de Notre-Dame des Anges près Québec. See Appendix A.4.

#### 5.4 Felix Pain

Evidence suggests that Pain was in Plaisance in 1694 and served the colony until 1700 or 1701.<sup>311</sup> According to the *Mortuologe*, he was born close to Paris, sometime around the year 1670.<sup>312</sup> Bacon notes that according to this source, he entered the Récollet Order at the age of sixteen.<sup>313</sup> The information in the *Mortuologe* conflicts with that found in the *Nécrologe*, which states that he entered the Récollet order at the age of nineteen. Bacon and Jouve suppose that he spent the prescribed five years studying prior to his ordination. If born in 1670 and nineteen when entering the order, he would have finished his studies and been ordained in 1694, the same year he was believed to have been in New

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<sup>311</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737. In this Bacon and Jouve's researches are in accordance with those of Cyprien Tanguay, *Répertoire général du Clergé canadien par ordre chronologique depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu'à nos jours*, Première partie (Québec: C. Darveau, 1868) 77; Bernard Pothier, "Pain, Félix," *DCB*, vol. 3, 541; and Michel Dumont-Johnson, *Apôtres ou agitateurs. La France missionnaire en Acadie* (Trois-Rivières: Boréal-Express, 1970) 143. While no document gives an absolute date for Pain's arrival in New France, the estimates provided by these scholars appear reasonable, given the available information.

<sup>312</sup> *Mortuologe*; Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737.

<sup>313</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737, note 33. Caution must be taken, however, not to attribute too much assurance of accuracy to the dates given in either the *Nécrologe* or the *Mortuologe*, as the entries therein were completed after the deaths of the personages in question and sometimes were written on second or third-hand information. The dates from these sources can be used with caution and should not be dispensed with as useless information.



France.<sup>314</sup> This assumption can be moderated somewhat given the elasticity of the known dates. The uncertainty with regards to his age at the time of profession as well as the ambiguity surrounding his date of birth indicate that he could have finished his studies anywhere between the years 1690 and 1695.<sup>315</sup>

Whatever the case, subsequent to his ordination, Pain was sent to the missions of New France by his native Province of Saint-Denis. A variety of scholars have asserted that he was sent to Plaisance in 1694, a statement not unreasonable given the fact that more Récollets were sent to the parish in that year.<sup>316</sup> Whether or not he was the only Récollet sent and whether he was the first to replace Sigismond are matters for further discussion and research, as no documentation has surfaced with respect to either issue. Jouve appears to think it probable that Pain replaced Sigismond,<sup>317</sup> simply by virtue of the chronology of their respective presense in Plaisance.<sup>318</sup> Until documentation surfaces pertaining

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<sup>314</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737.

<sup>315</sup> This time span is arrived at by allowing a year's grace either way with regards to his birth date and allowing for the validity of either the *Mortuologe* or the *Nécrologe*.

<sup>316</sup> Pothier, "Pain, Félix," 541; Dumont-Johnson, *Apotres ou Agitateurs*, 143; Tanguay, *Reperatoire du Clerge Canadien*, 77.

<sup>317</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737.

<sup>318</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 737.

to the travels of Pain, or until other evidence emerges with which to date his arrival, such speculations remain in question.<sup>319</sup>

There is a caveat to drawing such a conclusion, however, namely that the chronologies devised in the past tended to revolve around those Récollets of whom the names were known. There was a consistent effort to link the allusions to Récollets found in colonial letters to the Récollets whose identities were clear. In certain cases, this worked well and provided a more vivid picture of the chronological passage of events. In other situations, however, the attempt was strained and led to the supposition that the only Récollets present were those known by name. There was a concerted attempt to match all occurrences to known names, with the anonymous Récollets who served the colony falling by the wayside.

Inevitably, this fashion of examining the friars failed to account for obvious lacunae in the chronology and also failed to admit other friars into the picture. In essence, there was an implicit assumption that the list of names of Récollets known to have been associated with Plaisance was the sum total of names available and that all events and documents referred to the known few.

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<sup>319</sup> Given the proximity of Sigismond's and Pain's times in Plaisance, it is possible that the latter was in Plaisance in 1693, when Lahontan had his skirmishes with de Brouillan. Direct evidence of the date of Pain's arrival in Plaisance has not yet emerged from the archival depths and would inevitably shed further light on these matters.

Pain's presence surfaced repeatedly in Plaisance during his time there, both by virtue of his youth and his actions. Mentions of him include a condemnation of his youth and unsuitability for the post of fort chaplain and a decidedly antagonistic relationship with Pastour de Costebelle, the latter of whom complained to the Ministry.<sup>320</sup> The next mention of Pain by name was in 1702, when he signed a contract of registry in Port-Royale on the twenty-sixth of October.<sup>321</sup> Sometime during 1700 through 1702, therefore, Pain moved to Port-Royale. This fits with the known course of events, as it was in 1701 that the Récollets from Saint-Denis abandoned the Plaisance mission.<sup>322</sup> Some have proposed that Pain accompanied Mombeton de Brouillan from Plaisance to Ile Royale on June 20, 1701, when de Brouillan moved to assume his new post as governor of Acadia.<sup>323</sup> In a letter, de Brouillan mentioned that he kept in his service a Récollet from Plaisance, transporting said friar from Plaisance to Ile

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<sup>320</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 170-171. Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698; AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20, 216. A l'Evêque de Québec de Versailles, le 27 mai, 1699. See Appendices A.30 and A.31. The precise reasons for this exchange will be examined in further detail in this chapter in the section entitled "The Chaplain in the Fort." Briefly put, the actions of de Costebelle suggest that Pain's hostility towards him was not entirely unwarranted.

<sup>321</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 738.

<sup>322</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 129. Au Sr. de Monic; AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 149. Au Sr. de Monic. A Versailles le 13 avril 1701. See Appendix B.5.

Royale in June of 1701.<sup>324</sup> There is every reason to suppose that this theory holds fast, as it appears to fit with the data available regarding Pain's activities.

Felix Pain passed from Newfoundland to Acadia and served the remainder of his life as a Récollet of Saint-Denis in the missions throughout New France. His work often carried him to the more remote regions of Acadia, and he was ardent in his determination to maintain contact with the people to whom he ministered, regardless of their locations.<sup>325</sup> Pain's ministry in New France was not entirely without further incident, however, as he invoked the wrath of the governor of Acadia through the persecution of the fellow's activities. This governor, Simon-Pierre Denys de Bonaventure, was involved with one Dame de Freneuse, with whom it was alleged that he maintained indecent relations.<sup>326</sup> Pain and his Superior at Ile Royale, Patrice René, endeavoured to rectify the situation according to their responsibilities as custodians of the moral life of the community. Bonaventure, predictably, was not enamoured with their efforts and reacted by attempting to implicate the Récollets of Ile Royale in a charge of

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<sup>323</sup> Robert Le Blant, *Un colonial sous Louis XIV: Philippe de Pastour de Costebelle, gouverneur de Terre-Neuve puis de l'Ile Royale...* (Paris: Dax, 1935), 93. Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 738.

<sup>324</sup> AN, Colonies Series C11C, vol. 3, 142. De Brouillan au ministre, le 6 octobre 1702.

<sup>325</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 738-39.

<sup>326</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 5, 254. Félix Pain au ministre and AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 2, 751. Le ministre à M. de Subercase, le 22 mai, 1706.

disobedience to the king.<sup>327</sup> These accusations were primarily levelled by Bonaventure as a retaliatory measure because he perceived himself to be unjustly beset upon by the Franciscans.<sup>328</sup>

### 5.5 Other Récollets

Those Récollets in Plaisance whose names were recorded appear to have been in the minority. Several oblique references to the numbers of Récollets as well as overt mentions of specific numbers of Récollets sent to Newfoundland indicate that there were far more friars serving the parish than there are names. Many references only mention that a certain number of Récollets were being sent to the colony, as in 1692, when the ministry indicated that there would be two sent to Plaisance.<sup>329</sup> In 1695, a letter from Versailles indicated that the number of Récollets had grown such that their convent was no longer sufficiently large for

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<sup>327</sup> A captain by the name du Vivier impregnated a young woman of the community. The Récollets married the two when the woman was discovered to be six and a half months pregnant. At that time, a soldier was required to have his captain's permission to marry and the Récollets were forbidden to marry a couple without verifying this permission and properly announcing the bans in church. Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 739.

<sup>328</sup> Bacon, "Père Félix Pain," 739.

<sup>329</sup> "M. L'Evêque de Québec en qui le Roi prend une entière confiance, fait passer présentement deux Récollets pour desservir les cures de Plaisance et de S. Pierre..." AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 16-1, 206. A M. de Brouillant de Versailles, 1 avril 1692. See See Appendix A.16.

them.<sup>330</sup> Again, in 1697 there was a mention of the mission being enlarged by two Récollets, a move which the Récollets in Plaisance claimed necessitated an increase in funding. This report included a direct request by the Récollets for money with which to purchase supplies for their work.<sup>331</sup>

The report cited above stated that the mission was to be increased by two Récollets, indicating that there was at least one friar already serving the community at that time. From the description given, the request appears to have been one of the few made for supplies with which to serve the general populace. Most of the requests for supplies for Plaisance were similar in content, being for additional candles, books, ornaments and other religious paraphernalia, but differed in destination, as most went to the garrison chapel rather than the parish church. This document referred to the Récollets who served as *cures* to the inhabitants and fishermen, with no mention of the fort or the soldiers of the garrison. Precisely who the additional Franciscans were or even by whom the primary request had been made is not listed within this document, nor is there any record as to whether or not the Récollets actually received the monies they requested.

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<sup>330</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimetierre. A Versailles le 22 mars 1695. See Appendix A.22.

<sup>331</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 120, 14r. Excerpt from "Lettres et demandes particulieres du Canada", 1697. See Appendix A.25.

A final indication of the number of Récollets that passed into Plaisance is to be found in the concession of land by the crown in 1695. Louis XIV confirmed a land grant by de Brouillan to the Récollets in Plaisance, stating that

Les Pères Recolets establis à Plaisance nous ont fait très humbles remonstrance que le nombre de leurs Religieux estant augmenté, ils n'ont pas assez de lieu pour les loger et que mesme leur cimetièrre n'ayant pas assez d'étendue ils se trouvent fort embarrassés quand il faut faire enterrer les corps de ceux qui meurent aud. Plaisance.<sup>332</sup>

In this instance, it is unclear as to whether the Récollets were burying inhabitants or other Récollets, as there is only one mention of a Récollet dying in the Plaisance parish throughout its French occupation.<sup>333</sup>

If indeed the Récollets outgrew their convent and if there was a steady, if irregular, supply of friars to Plaisance, it necessarily follows that there are additional names which remain obscured by time. The tendency on the part of the secular authorities to examine the rank or role of the religious in Plaisance to

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<sup>332</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimitierre. A Versailles le 22 mars 1695. See Appendix A.22.

<sup>333</sup> The Récollet who died in St. Pierre actually died in 1707 and belonged to the Province of Brittany. AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-1, 3. Le Ministre au Père Saturnin Dirop, ancien Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne a Morlaix. A Versailles, le 11 janvier 1708. See Appendix B.25. There is no record of a Récollet of Saint-Denis having died in Plaisance.

the exclusion of their names creates difficulties in attempting to enumerate the individuals involved in the mission.

### 5.6 The Bishop's Epistle of 1692

The first and only pastoral epistle from the Bishop of Québec to the inhabitants and religious of the colony of Plaisance was very likely written in 1692, although there has been some debate, with estimates targeting dates as far back as 1690.<sup>334</sup> While most sources addressing the Récollets in Newfoundland quote or transcribe in full this letter, as does Lemay, rather few of them actually analyse its contents.<sup>335</sup> In fact, it says rather little about the climate of religious life in the community, although there are several points worthy of some note. The letter mentions Récollets having been sent to live among the people of Plaisance and it also recorded Saint-Vallier's conviction that temporal miseries are born of sin. He proceeds by mentioning the unhappy time of war in which

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<sup>334</sup> Têtu and Gagnon, *Mandements*, 288. The date mentioned as being the most probable was arrived at by Jouve, who examined the location of the document within the collection of bishops' papers with respect to the papers surrounding it and also through an understanding of the allusion made within this letter to the election of a new pope. For a more specific analysis, see Lemay's paper *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, 17-18. According to Henri-Raymond Casgrain, "Voyage de Mgr. De Saint-Vallier en Acadie en 1689," *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, 1 (1895): 164, the document ought to be dated as 1690, as Casgrain believed that Saint-Vallier wrote it so that the inhabitants of Plaisance and St. Pierre would realize that he had not forgotten them in the year after his visit. In reality, the claim of Lemay appears to hold more weight, given the contents and context of the letter.

<sup>335</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, 17-18.



the colonists found themselves. Further contents of the letter include allusions, previously recognised by Hugolin Lemay as referring to the election of Pope Innocent XII and the subsequent celebration. Saint-Vallier finishes by mentioning the poverty of the colony and offering his prayers and best wishes.

All of these features appear to allude to the problems faced by the community during the years 1690 through to 1692, during which period they were attacked, raided and sacked by pirates and Englishmen. In fact, the strong recognition in this letter of the anguish and desolation of the Plaisance community would appear to reflect the letter of pleading sent to the king and bishop by Joseph Denis in 1690. It is entirely probable that this epistle is a response, to the message conveyed to the officials of New France by the inhabitants of Plaisance through the pen of Denis. During the year prior to the arrival of de Brouillan, there was a general outcry of religious bleakness from all quarters, with letters such as de Costebelle's indicating that further Récollets were necessary to the well-being of the colony.<sup>336</sup> Saint-Vallier appears to have dealt with the situation by sending Récollets to the community and urging the inhabitants to purge themselves of their sins that their earthly lives might be more palatable.<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 183-184. De Costebelle au ministre, le 28 decembre 1689. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 235. Copie des Mémoires présentés à M. de Pontchartrain pour Plaisance, par le S. Pastour. 1691.

<sup>337</sup> Têtu and Gagnon, *Mandements*, 288.

### **5.7 Religious Life under Governor de Brouillan**

After the departure of Parat in 1690, de Costebelle did not have long to wait for information on how to deal with the community in the absence of a governor. In 1691, Pierre Mombeton de Brouillan arrived in Plaisance as its new leader, a position in which he effected several changes which had an impact upon religious life in the colony. Within three years after his arrival, he engaged in a substantial project aimed at refurbishing the religious facilities of the colony, enlarging and redecorating the church, constructing a chapel, and improving the comfort of the Récollet fathers.<sup>338</sup>

#### **5.7.1 The New Chapel in Fort St. Louis**

In 1691, the construction of Fort Louis was begun and within that fort, the erection of a new chapel was undertaken by de Brouillan, who exchanged with the Ministry in France various letters pertaining to the materials, labour and decorations to be used in the building. Among the wood used for the construction was debris from a ship entitled “Le Bob” and most of the labour was derived

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<sup>338</sup> De Brouillan’s primary focus was actually on the improvement of the fortifications and defensibility of Plaisance. René Baudry, “Mombeton de Brouillan, Jacques-François de,” in *DCB*, vol. 2, 479.

from the inhabitants of the colony.<sup>339</sup> Also integral to the negotiations between de Brouillan and the Ministry were the ornaments and decorations for the chapel, including a mural designed for use on the high altar.<sup>340</sup> The mural was funded by the French king,<sup>341</sup> and the ornaments were also paid for from a fund assigned to the amelioration of the Plaisance religious edifices.<sup>342</sup> The altar, to be dedicated to Louis XIV, was to be paid for by the crown, provided the cost did not exceed 400 livres.<sup>343</sup>

Ornamentation did not end in 1695, however, as a request submitted in 1696 indicated the goods needed by the garrison chapel<sup>344</sup> and a further

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<sup>339</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 17-1, 55. A M. de Brouillant, dud. Jour, A Versailles, le 10 mars, 1694. See Appendix A.20.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>341</sup> The ornaments and the mural for the chapel were sent by ships sailing from Nantes sometime after March of 1694. AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 17-1, 67. See Appendix A.21.

<sup>342</sup> Not all expenses were paid for from this fund, however, as a document records a forced donation of twenty-eight livres from a Sr. Hardoüin, merchant of Nantes, to the colony for the ornamentation of the chapel. "Estat de distribution de la somme de six mil livres qui doit estre payée par le Sr. Hardoüin, marchand de Nantes en exécution du traité fait avec luy le 3e du mois de Février dernier au sujet de la Colonie de Plaisance: Sçavoir: ... Pour l'orement de la chapelle... 28 livres". AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-2, 72.

<sup>343</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-1, 42. A Mr. Desgrassieres. A Versailles, le 10 mars 1694. See Appendix A.19.

<sup>344</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 19-1, 29. A Versailles, le 22 fevrier 1696. Estat de ce qu'il faut pour la Chapelle du Fort St. Louis de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terreneuve. See Appendix A.23.

communication the following spring lists goods sent.<sup>345</sup> 1698 saw the continuation of such funding, with a thousand livres being made available to the garrison, much of which was spent on the chapel ornamentation.<sup>346</sup> The following year still more money was spent on church decorations and equipment, with the secular authorities in the community purchasing those objects demanded by the chaplain.<sup>347</sup> One of the most striking characteristics of this new chapel was its exclusivity; it was located inside Fort Louis and was designed primarily for the service of the soldiers of the garrison. The abundance of materials and goods purchased were allocated to this chapel, provoking the question of what decorations and goods were available to be used by those *curés* serving the inhabitants.

### 5.7.2 Récollet Property

The soldiers of the garrison were not the only ones to benefit from de Brouillan's religious inclinations. The 1694 census demonstrated the addition of a graveyard to the property of the Récollet fathers and the fact that they had

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<sup>345</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 19-2, 49. Etat des Munitions à envoyer à Plaisance, le 30 janvier, 1697. See Appendix A.26.

<sup>346</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 20-1, 294. A Versailles, le 21 juin 1698. A M. Begon. See Appendix A.29.

<sup>347</sup> "Vous trouverez cy joint un estat... de quelques ornements d'Eglise que l'aumosnier demande que vous ferez achpter aussy sur le fonds que je vous fais remettre pour cette Colonie." AN, Colonies, Series B, 20-2, 38-39. A Versailles, le 21 mars 1699.

moved house within the community of Plaisance .<sup>348</sup> The details of this change were outlined in a letter of confirmation of the receipt of property written by the king and dated to March 22, 1695.<sup>349</sup> As is the case for the royal letter confirming the 1689 establishment of the Récollet mission in Plaisance, this letter appears to have been written some time after the events with which it is concerned.<sup>350</sup> In this letter, certain changes in the nature of the Récollet mission become apparent. The mission had grown in size to such an extent that the friars could not all be housed in the extant convent and lodgings. Further, their numbers appear to have exceeded the expanse of their cemetery, a situation which had apparently caused great embarrassment on occasion. Along with the land were granted the buildings on it, although precisely what the buildings were was not made clear. These lands, for both residence and cemetery, were granted with fiscal indemnity, freeing the Récollets from the burden of paying taxes or any other monies to the king or his successors.

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<sup>348</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, Registres de l'état civil, recensements et documents divers, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121. Etat des Ramplacements, 1694.

<sup>349</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimitière. A Versailles le 22, mars, 1695. See Appendix A.22.

<sup>350</sup> The patent letters from the king to the Récollets of Plaisance arrived in 1692, three years after the initial establishment. The 1695 letter appears to verify a transaction that occurred in 1693, with this earlier date arrived at by virtue of a record having been entered in the census data of 1694.

The census of 1694 recorded the Récollets as possessing a church, a house with both garden and courtyard and a cemetery.<sup>351</sup> There was no precise mention as to the orientation or the exact location of these assets within the census, the only indication of their geographical situation being that they were listed under the category of the Petit Grave in Plaisance. A map of 1708 illustrated their location in the community, showing the orientation of church, cemetery and convent.<sup>352</sup> It appears that this property was granted to the Récollets by de Brouillan to remedy the tight quarters in which the friars found themselves. Whether or not money changed hands for the property was not mentioned and no contract of sale remains, if one ever existed. The only letter of any significance regarding the property is the letter from the crown granting the Récollets possession in accordance with what de Brouillan reported to have given them.<sup>353</sup> From this letter it appears that the land and buildings were given to the

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<sup>351</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G 1, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121. Etat des Ramplacements, 1694.

<sup>352</sup> The detail of this map has been enlarged to better demonstrate the church property. Evident upon enlargement is the cross found on the front of a building above and to the right of the church structure. This attribute appears to indicate that the edifice was a convent. Le Plan du Port de P[laisance], 1708. See Appendix C, Figures 6 and 7.

<sup>353</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimetierre. A Versailles le 22 mars 1695. See Appendix A.22.

Récollets by de Brouillan and that no sum was paid by the friars for the property.<sup>354</sup>

Récollet property in the 1600s did not only take the form of buildings and land, however, as there is some evidence that at one point the Franciscans had possession of a man captured by the French. In 1699, the Crown wrote to de Costebelle seeking information regarding the privateers and pirates which frequented the coast of Newfoundland. In this letter, the ministry mentioned that information concerning the nationalities and points of departure of the pirates might be gleaned from speaking, among others, to the *nègre* given to the Guardian of the Récollets.<sup>355</sup> Whether or not this captive was in some way connected with the pirates on whose ship Patrice René both signed and retracted a contract is unascertainable.<sup>356</sup> Given the proximity of the incident between

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<sup>354</sup> "... et comme en attendant nostre lettre de confirmation led. S. de Brouillant leur a accoré vingt neuf toises de long et onze toises trois pieds de large compris les bastiments construits et outre ce vingt cinq toises de long et vingt toises de large pour augmenter leur cimetiere..." AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimetierre. A Versailles le 22 mars 1695. See Appendix A.22.

<sup>355</sup> The actual word used to describe the captive is "nègre" and no indications of either his ethnic background or place of birth are given. AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-2, 132. A Versailles, le 15 avril 1699. A M. de Costebelle. See Appendix A.32.

<sup>356</sup> In 1698, Patrice René had interaction with forbans in St. Pierre. France. Archives Départementales de la Gironde, Amirauté de Guyenne. 6B Attribution judiciaires. Vol. 1091, 1698, nov. 3, Bordeaux.

René and the pirates to the letter regarding the captive, it is probable that the Negro was given to the Récollets at that point as there appears to be relatively little mention of any other contact between friars and pirates during that period. The ethics of slave ownership aside, such an acquisition may have been quite useful in providing labour to the Récollets, although the precise details were not recorded. No mention was made in the documentary record of the eventual fate of the captive, nor was any information of his treatment by the Récollets given.

For the most part, the Récollets funding came from the system of donations unique to Plaisance and later Louisbourg, although there were certainly other sources of funding as well. One of the larger and more disputed donations was recorded by Governor Joseph de Monic in October 1700, just after two of the three Récollets of Plaisance had been withdrawn from the colony. Several years earlier, a man within the colony died and left one thousand livres to the two churches of Plaisance, an event which brought to light the corrupt dealings of the notary and clerk of the town. A man by the name of Barat, whom de Monic called a buffoon, intercepted and kept the money, depriving the church of her dues. De Monic added that the Superior of the Récollets had testified to the validity of these claims and that he, the governor, awaited the crown's judgment on these matters.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 69-70. De Monic au ministre, le 22 octobre 1700. See Appendix A.36.



Barat submitted a defence of his position, stating that there had been a sum of two thousand livres left by the deceased, with half of the sum to be donated to the Church and the other half to his estate. According to Barat, there were debts to be paid on behalf of the man and a certain portion of the money could not be recovered. Further, Barat claimed to have given 140 livres to the Church, half of the 280 livres which were remaining after all accounts had been settled.<sup>358</sup> Attempts to find the inheritors of the remaining money had been futile, although some traces had been found leading him to suspect that the remaining relations were in St. Malo. With the approval of Governor de Monic, he had given the remaining funds to Sr. de Mahier, a merchant of St. Malo, in the hopes that the appropriate heirs might be found.<sup>359</sup>

Barat had been deprived of his employment as clerk and notary because of the claims of fraud and theft made by de Monic and substantiated by the testimony of the Récollets. The Crown does not appear to have placed much credence in these claims, however, as marginal notes in this manuscript indicate that certain of Barat's claims, notably those regarding how he had disposed of the money and what funds were originally available, were true.<sup>360</sup> Further, Barat's

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<sup>358</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 214. Le Sr. Barat cy devant greffier, Plaisance. N.d.

<sup>359</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 214v. Le Sr. Barat cy devant greffier, Plaisance. N.d.

<sup>360</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-215. Le Sr. Barat cy devant greffier, Plaisance. N.d.

request to be reinstated in his former position was looked upon favourably by the ministry.<sup>361</sup> Apparently the Church received only a donation of 140 livres, an amount substantially smaller than that for which they obviously had hoped.

### 5.7.3 Lahontan's Voyage to Plaisance

Information concerning the Plaisance Récollets appears in an array of sources, one of which is the publication by Lahontan entitled *Nouveaux Voyages*.<sup>362</sup> Louis-Armand de Lom D'Arce de Lahontan served as king's lieutenant in Plaisance during the year 1693, during which time he experienced the rather unpleasant hospitality of de Brouillan and the varied counsel of the Récollet fathers. Lahontan, as he was generally called, was born in 1666 at Lahontan, in the Basses-Pyrénées, France.<sup>363</sup> By his claims, he came to Canada at the age of seventeen, in 1683.<sup>364</sup> In actual fact, he was in Plaisance in 1692 as

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<sup>361</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 215. Le Sr. Barat cy devant greffier, Plaisance. N.d.

<sup>362</sup> Contained in the publication Baron de Lahontan, Louis-Armand de Lom d'Arce, *Oeuvres complètes*, volume I, Edition critique par Réal Ouellet avec la collaboration d'Alain Beaulieu (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1990).

<sup>363</sup> David M. Hayne, "Lom D'Arce de Lahontan, Louis-Armand de," in *DCB*, vol. 2, 440.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.* Hayne discusses the connection between Lahontan's claims to have been seventeen and the course of his travels as recorded in Lahontan's writings.

well as 1693.<sup>365</sup> In July of 1692, on the orders of Frontenac, he boarded the *Sainte-Anne* to escort a fleet of Basque fishing boats to France. In August of that year, he found himself floating for a month in the Plaisance harbour, awaiting the Basque ships. While he was there, the governor, de Brouillan, received word that five English vessels were heading for the colony. Lahontan and sixty Basque sailors were stationed approximately one mile from the fort. On September 17, three days after the original warning that the English were coming, Lahontan and his men prevented the landing of several crews of English. The following day saw an exchange of prisoners and the subsequent withdrawal of the English.<sup>366</sup> After this exchange, Lahontan returned to France, not realising that he was soon to be sent back to Plaisance and the unpleasant de Brouillan.<sup>367</sup>

It was rather Lahontan's return to Plaisance as the king's lieutenant, a position which he had earned two weeks after his admission to the Marine Guards on 1 March 1693, which set him in the annals of the religious history of

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<sup>365</sup> Lahontan, Lettre XXIII, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 489. In this letter, Lahontan includes a copy of his oft-reproduced map, which delineates the positions in which he and his Basque sailors waited in the defence against the English in September of 1692. This sojourn in Plaisance appears to have been almost entirely focussed on military incidents and no mention is made by Lahontan of any religious aspects of the settlement.

<sup>366</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 479-494, of which pages 487 to 494 concern Plaisance.

<sup>367</sup> Hayne, "Lahontan," 442.

Plaisance.<sup>368</sup> It is not clear precisely when the conflict between Lahontan and de Brouillan began, but Lahontan's return was quite obviously not a welcome surprise to the governor. Lahontan records the events which transpired with respect to his return voyage to Newfoundland in letter XXV of his *Nouveaux Voyages*,<sup>369</sup> dated to 31 January 1694. Writing from Portugal in the spring following his adventures in Newfoundland, Lahontan outlined his perspective on the strife between him and the governor from May through December of 1693. For a variety of reasons, de Brouillan was not pleased with the presence of Lahontan and made it his single-handed mission to rid himself of the lieutenant. Uncomplimentary reports of Lahontan were sent by the governor, in which de Brouillan levelled charges against the former of insubordination and a failure to adequately fulfil his duties.<sup>370</sup> Matters escalated after Lahontan charged de Brouillan with cruel treatment of the soldiers and inhabitants of the garrison and appears to have engaged in the juvenile tactic of composing insolent ditties about the governor. The culmination of the conflict was physical violence and threat, as Lahontan described the actions taken by the governor as

... il entra masqué dans ma Maison avec ses Valets,  
caasant vitres, bouteilles, verres, & renversant tables,  
chaises, armoires, & tout ce qu'il trouva sous sa main.

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<sup>368</sup> Lahontan's appointments are listed in Hayne, "Lahontan," 442.

<sup>369</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 501-510.

<sup>370</sup> Hayne, "Lahontan," 442.

Avant que j'eusse le temps d'entrer dans mon Cabinet pour prendre mes pisolets, cette troupe insolente disparut fort à propos; car je l'aurois chargée & même poursuivie, si les Conviez ne m'eussent retenu. le lendemain ses Valets firent main basse sur les miens, qui ne s'attendoient à rien moins qu'à être roüez de coups de bâtons.<sup>371</sup>

Lahontan's immediate reaction was to heed the advice of the Récollets, who attempted to prevent further escalation of the conflict by advising him to lay low and let matters dissipate. Lahontan records this advice and his reaction to it stating that

...je méditois les moyens de rendre la pareille à ces Assassins, lors que les Recolets me remontrèrent que pour ne pas altérer le service du Roi, il falloit que je dissimulasse mon ressentiment. Je pris donc le parti de me renfermemr, & de m'attacher à la lecture, pour tâcher de dissiper le chagrin que je ressentoi...<sup>372</sup>

If Lahontan were intent on downplaying the conflict, the governor was not. Apparently hoping that the king's lieutenant would leave as a result of the invasion of his privacy in such an aggressive fashion, de Brouillan took matters a step further and threatened the lives of two men working for Lahontan.

...il envoya arrêter deux Soldats que j'avois envoyé faucher du foin dans les prairies à une demi-lieuë de la Place; Tellement qu'ayant été surpris dans leur travail, on les lia & on les amena prisonniers sur le

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<sup>371</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 504.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*

pied de Deserteurs, sous prétexte qu'ils avoient couché  
deux nuits hors de la Place sans sa permission...<sup>373</sup>

At this point the Récollets appear to have realised the danger inherent in the conflict between the two secular powers. The lives of two soldiers were directly endangered as a result of a match of forces between two men who ought to have known better than to waste the community's resources on such power struggles. The two soldiers were to be executed for desertion, a charge Lahontan claims was levelled in order to upset him and to force his hand. This assessment appears to have been suitable, as the lives of the men were spared at the pleas of the Récollets.

...ce qui auroit été de plus funeste pour ces deux  
pauvres innocens, c'est que sans les instances prières  
des Recolets & de ses Maîtresses, il leur auroit fait  
casser la tête, en vûë de me chagriner. Après cèt  
incident, les Recolets me conseillèrent de l'aller voir &  
de le prier de vouloir bien cesser toutes ses  
persécutions, en l'assurant que j'étois entièrement son  
Serviteur & son ami. Durus est, hic sermo\*.<sup>374</sup>

\*Gospel of John, 6:60. (Vg)

The instructions of the Récollets altered dramatically with this last development, shifting from an advocating of passivity to an encouragement of active submission to the governor's authority and desires. Lahontan stated that they

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<sup>373</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 504-505.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

encouraged him to meet with de Brouillan and to demonstrate as much as possible that he was supportive of and obedient to the governor. Lahontan's quotation from the Gospel of John was particularly apt, and signifies how difficult the king's lieutenant found such advice to follow.

Cependant, les Recolets qui vouloient appaiser ces troubles naissants n'eurent point de peine à nous raccommoder, lui remontrant de quelle conséquence il étoit de vivre en bonne intelligence ensemble, pour éviter les suite fâcheuses qui résulteroient à la fin de toutes nos querelles. Cette proposition d'accomodement lui fut très agréable en apparence...<sup>375</sup>

The general suggestions of the Récollets appear to have revolved around the pacification of the governor on the part of Lahontan and a preservation of peace within the colony. It is unknown precisely what the Récollets said to the governor, for they surely attempted to sway him towards peace in much the same way as they did Lahontan. It appears, however, from the writings of Lahontan, that the governor was a less reasonable man. Even if Lahontan's words are taken with due attention to his biases, the actions taken by de Brouillan in order to evict the king's lieutenant seem somewhat extreme. Undoubtedly both men were childish in their behaviours and actions and both seemed well-accustomed to creating a façade of reason and the desire for peace. The governor, upon the

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<sup>375</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 507.

eventual departure of Lahontan, stated that he invoked the goodwill efforts of the Récollets to persuade the king's lieutenant to remain.

Depuis ma lettre escrite monsieur le baron de Lahontan m'a dit estre dans la resolution de passer en france. Je luy ay exposé tout ce que j'ay creu quy peut l'engager à rester, j'ay mesme prié mes bons religieux qui sont icy de luy faire connoistre qu'il estoit du service du Roy de ne pas abandonner ainsy ce poste...<sup>376</sup>

While Lahontan continued to portray the governor as the irrational one, stating that the Récollets, having read the lieutenant's letters, believed that he would be best advised to take precautions against the wrath of the governor. The Franciscans appear also to have bowed out of the negotiations, wishing to wash their hands of the deal and refusing to involve themselves by giving advice in what they perceived as a growing power struggle in which both parties sought personal gain rather than peace.

Je me contenterai de vous dire, que dès que les recolets eurent vû & lû les suppositions contenuës dans ses écrits, ils n'hésitérent point à me conseiller de prendre mes précautions, me déclarant ingenuement qu'ils prétendoient plus se mêler de cette affaire, d'autant qu'ils reconnoissoient avoir innocemment concouru à ma perte, en rétablissant la paix entre lui & moi.<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Brouillan, lettre au ministre, December 14, 1693. AC C 11 C, vol. 1, 279. In Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 507, note 783.

<sup>377</sup> Lahontan, *Nouveaux Voyages*, 506.



Lahontan left Newfoundland in a hurry, having paid the captain of the last ship left in Plaisance to convey him away from the governor.<sup>378</sup>

The lasting impression of Governor de Brouillan conveyed by the writings of Lahontan is that of an unreasonable, cruel and rather vicious man who sought power and autonomy above all else. While certain of these accusations may indeed hold up under a close study of the actions of de Brouillan, most are exaggerated due to the quarrel between the two men.

As is the case with most historical figures, de Brouillan was not an entirely one-sided person, regardless of any individual's portrayal of him. One of the most intriguing features of individuals is the way in which they are able to reconcile or, rather, maintain, diametrically opposed values without demonstrating any signs of interior conflict. De Brouillan had no qualms about expelling Lahontan from the colony, nor had he any compunctions about leaving the impression that he would willingly execute men in order to do so. During this same span of time, however, he showed a keen interest in religion in Plaisance, enlarging the Récollet property and constructing a new chapel within the fort.<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Hayne, "Lahontan," 442-43.

<sup>379</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121. Etat des Ramplacements, 1694; AN, Colonies, Series F3, vol 54, 297, and AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan, Gouverneur de Plaisance a fait aux Récollets d'un terrain pour augmenter leur résidence et faire un cimetière, le 22 mars, 1695.

While sceptics would tend to view such actions as an attempt on the part of de Brouillan to buy the allegiance of the friars, simple additional money would have been sufficient to such an end. The donation of a graveyard and the petitioning for funds to enlarge the church and glorify it were more in the interests of the garrison and community as a whole than in those of the Franciscans. A more realistic view of the governor's actions might be that he was concerned with the religious life of the growing colony for which he was responsible, but had a sharp temper and was constantly struggling to maintain control of the colonial outpost which was his charge.

An additional feature worthy of note and pertaining to the historical figures involved is that the Récollets concerned with the struggle between Lahontan and the governor are not specifically named. The indications provided by Lahontan's and the governor's letters demonstrate that there was more than one friar, but precisely how many or who they were is not stated outright. It is likely that Cosme Sigismond was one of these men, although making such an hypothesis runs the risk of falling into the same trap as have other scholars in tending to assign known events to named Récollets.<sup>380</sup> There was at least one

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<sup>380</sup> There are other reasons for hesitating in assigning the name Sigismond to one of the Récollets with whom Lahontan had his dealings, among them the possibility that Sigismond was working in the St. Pierre mission and was not actually present in Plaisance proper. While such a possibility remains speculative, it must be taken into account. Other Récollet Superiors of the Plaisance mission, such as Patrice René, served the Iles St. Pierre. The only known information regarding Sigismond's stay in Plaisance is the date of his departure.

other friar and there may even have been more. It is possible that further archival researches in the future may yield more details as to the identities of these men.

#### 5.7.4 D'Iberville's campaign of 1696

Perhaps the best-known French personage in the history of Newfoundland prior to 1714 is Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, whose legendary tactics have inspired military historians to write of his trek across the Avalon Peninsula, which resulted in a temporary victory for the French forces.<sup>381</sup> While the military aspects of D'Iberville's exploits are only of passing significance to the study of the religious life of Plaisance, one of the sources upon which most knowledge regarding these actions is based is of crucial interest. The account of D'Iberville's voyages was kept by his chaplain, Father Jean Baudoin, a Franciscan Sulpician priest. The writings take the form of a diary, entitled *Journal du voyage que j'ay fait avec M. D'Iberville en Acadie et à Terre-Neuve du 2 juin 1696 jusqu'en mai 1697* and was ultimately designed to be returned to the Ministry of

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<sup>381</sup> For a detailed account of the manoeuvres of D'Iberville, the reader is directed to the excellent work of Alan Williams, entitled *Father Baudoin's War*, (St. John's, NF: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987), in which the specifics of D'Iberville's tactics are outlined and annotated. Further readings on the area include Bernard Pothier, "Le Moyne d'Iberville," *DCB*, vol. 2, 390-400; and Le Blant, *Phillippe de Pastour de Costebelle*.

the Marine in France.<sup>382</sup> Williams delineates the publication history quite well in the foreword to his monograph, tracing how the account made its way into public circulation through a translation into English and eventual publication in a popular Newfoundland newspaper.<sup>383</sup> This popular interest in Baudoin's writing has led to an overemphasis of his importance in the religious history of Plaisance. Baudoin spent very little time in Plaisance and did rather little in Newfoundland as a whole. His chief role was that of military chronicler and chaplain, and his stay was as temporary as that of d'Iberville.

Abbé Baudoin, as he was often called, was born at Nantes and originally was destined to be a musketeer in the king's guards. His life took a turn for the religious with his ordination in 1685 and subsequent travels to New France.<sup>384</sup> His record as a missionary in Acadia was somewhat stained with reports of high-handedness and violence. The only favourable word spoken of him was by Champigny, who complimented him on his ability to handle natives. The result was that Baudoin was asked by de Pontchartrain to accompany d'Iberville and his rather ethnically diverse troops to Newfoundland.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> It was addressed to the Ministry. Williams, *Father Baudoin's War*, v.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>384</sup> Honorius Provost, "Beaudoin, Abbé Jean," in *DCB*, vol. 1, 80.

<sup>385</sup> Williams, *Father Baudoin's War*, 146.

Baudoin's account did not specifically mention the Récollets in Plaisance, but did make some mention of the religious climate in French Newfoundland at that time. Among his own activities was the act of having said mass.<sup>386</sup> It can only be assumed that he provided the appropriate absolutions and rites to the soldiers prior to the various skirmishes and that he performed last rites and possibly mortuary rituals as needed.

Baudoin recorded having encountered some inhabitants of Brigue, stating that, "Les habitants de brigue sont aussy venus, et huit Irlandais catholiques, que les anglais traitent icy comme des esclaves".<sup>387</sup> Whether the diminished social status of these Irish Catholics was a result of their ancestry, religion, or economic rank cannot be ascertained, although Baudoin seemed to feel that it was related to their faith.

During Baudoin's time in Plaisance, he was ill with what he called brain fever and mentioned in his diary that the care he received was of the highest quality.<sup>388</sup> Who tended him and whether or not he encountered the Récollets in that place were not mentioned. The only other significant role of Baudoin was that he served as a peacemaker between de Brouillan and d'Iberville on several

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<sup>386</sup> Baudoin, Journal, Manuscript, 13, in *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>387</sup> Baudoin, Journal, Manuscript, 16, in *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>388</sup> Baudoin, Journal, Manuscript, 5, in *Ibid.*, 175.

occasions, no doubt falling into much of the same diplomatic role between these two men as the Récollets.<sup>389</sup>

### 5.8 The Property Dispute of 1698

Attempting to follow the locations in which the Récollets of Saint-Denis lived at varying times in their ministry creates almost as many difficulties as trying to discern their individual names and identities. Their initial habitation appears to have been on the Grand Grave, as is listed in the contract of sale dated to 1689.<sup>390</sup> The next concrete mention of a Récollet habitation is in 1694, when the Récollets were listed as inhabiting property granted to them by de Brouillan, as is mentioned earlier in this chapter.<sup>391</sup> A final reference to property in Plaisance belonging to the Récollets of Saint-Denis was also made in 1698 and appeared in the census as a description of a problem of litigation between the Récollets and Pierre Courtiau, an inhabitant of the colony.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Baudoin, Journal, Manuscript, 5-6, in *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>390</sup> Text in Réveillaud, *Histoire chronologique*, 236-237. This dwelling was located as indicated in Appendix C, Figures 4 and 5.

<sup>391</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121. Etat des Ramplacements, 1694 and AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan, Gouverneur de Plaisance a fait aux Récollets d'un terrain pour augmenter leur résidence et faire un cimetière, le 22 mars, 1695.

<sup>392</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12, 25-26. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

Few scholars have demonstrated an interest in this account which, when combined with the knowledge available regarding the Récollets during this and subsequent periods, yields considerable information about the activities of and public opinion concerning the Récollets of Paris.

The description of the litigation states that the habitation in question was purchased ten or twelve years prior to the 1698 census by the Récollet fathers. This does not entirely correlate, as the date of the original sale was 1689. Nine years before, the property was purchased by the Récollets from Jougla. According to Courtiau's claim, Jougla possessed the property without a *brevet*, or title, from the king. The habitation was then purchased in 1692 by Courtiau from the Superior of the Récollets for one thousand *livres*. There is no way of knowing who the Superior was at the time of sale. It may have been Joseph Denis, if this father stayed until 1692. It may also have been Cosme Sigismond or, equally probably, another Récollet who served as Superior in 1692. What this document does indicate, however, is that there was at least one Récollet in Plaisance in 1692.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> One could speculate that such a property was most likely to have been sold either because the friars required the money, or because they were essentially leaving the community. Given the raids which occurred in 1690 and 1692, the former possibility suggests itself more readily, especially given the fact that the Récollet presence continued in Plaisance in 1693 and 1694. There is also the possibility that the friars simply wished to change locations, although no specific evidence exists to support or disprove this potentiality.

The next set of details related to the actual conflict between Récollet and inhabitant, as the monetary details were spelled out. The property was to be sold for one thousand *livres*, half of which Courtiau paid up front. Soon thereafter, Courtiau was granted a *brevet* for the property by the king, whereupon he believed that he was not required to pay the remainder of the bill. The Récollets took from him a measure of beach, which was valued at two hundred *livres*, thereby leaving Courtiau with a three hundred *livre* debt.

There was no mention of why the Récollets sold the property, nor was there any hint in this document of their having relocated. The census of 1694 found them on the Petit Grave, on which they had a church, a house, a graveyard, and some additional land for a courtyard and garden,<sup>394</sup> while in 1695, the king granted them this property outright.<sup>395</sup> In 1693, they presumably outgrew the older structures, although nothing records exactly when they assumed control of the new buildings, nor can the precise date of sale of the Jougla property to Courtiau be pinned down. The regaining of interest in the property in 1698 may indicate either a decrease in the number of Récollets or a

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<sup>394</sup>AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121 and AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan, Gouverneur de Plaisance a fait aux Récollets d'un terrain pour augmenter leur résidence et faire un cimetière, le 22 mars, 1695. See Appendix A.22.

<sup>395</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372. A Versailles, le 22 mars, 1695. Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan Gouverneur de Plaisance a faite aux Recolets dudit Lieu d'un terrain pour augmenter leur residence et faire un cimitierre. Appendix A.22.



need for the monetary assets of the property. Essentially, the chronology of exchange and the intent of the Récollets in selling and attempting to regain the Grand Grave property remain guesswork.

The census of 1698, in which Courtiau's contention was recorded, was made by de Brouillan, and the final paragraph concerning the Récollet property and Courtiau's right thereto offered the governor's opinion regarding the claim. De Brouillan took the side of Courtiau, stating that the Récollets possessed the property without title, by contrast with Courtiau who received his *brevet*. The claim of the Récollets, according to de Brouillan, was that the property could not legally have been sold as it belonged to their church and therefore was not saleable by the Superior. De Brouillan's final opinion is that Courtiau owned the property and ought not to be shaken from it, nor should he to have to pay the three hundred *livres*, as he had a *brevet*. Chances are quite good that de Brouillan also felt that the Récollets ought to make use of the property they currently held on the Petit Grave, a property which he had made available to them, rather than pursuing a property they had lost interest in some years back.

The Récollet responsible for the litigation was the Superior of the mission in Plaisance, who at that time was Patrice René. In the long-standing tradition of monastic legal battles, René was trying to regain a piece of land he recognised as valuable to the mission. There is no record as to whether or not he was successful, although given the fact that Courtiau continued to live in the dwelling

as well as the governor's support of his doing so, it appears likely that the Récollets were obliged to live elsewhere. The variety of census data from 1701, 1706, 1710 and 1711 gives a little indication as to the outcome. In 1701, Courtiau appeared to be occupying roughly the same position on the beach, according to the order in which the names of the inhabitants appear.<sup>396</sup> The property remained in the name of the Courtiau family until the final census of 1711.<sup>397</sup> The logical conclusion is that the Récollets lost the bid to regain their property and were obliged to continue in their monastic property on the Petit Grave, or to set up their dwelling elsewhere.

The problem becomes not one of finding out precisely which property they owned, but rather one of finding even in which area they lived. Apart from an overt mention in 1694 and an indirect reference in 1698, the Récollets did not appear in any censuses of Newfoundland and St. Pierre. Not being heads of households, fishermen, women, children or even hired labour, the Récollets did not fit any of the categories into which census data were channelled. The most

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<sup>396</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, Registres de l'état civil, recensements et documents divers, vol. 467, numéro 13. Recensement des matelots pêcheurs que Les habitants de plais<sup>ce</sup> ont Engagés Pour l'anné 1701, 1701. Made in October of 1700 by de Monic. It is unlikely that any Récollets would have been listed in this particular census, as they appear to have abandoned the mission (save for one Récollet) in the summer of this year. The remaining friar appears to have been left to serve the fort and therefore would probably have lived in the cell attached to the fort's chapel. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 41. Sr. de Monic au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 30 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.35.

<sup>397</sup> AN, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 15. *Recensement des Familles de la Colonie de Plaisance Ile de Terre Neuve en 1706.*

likely explanation for this phenomenon is that they were routinely left out of censuses, with their inclusions in 1694 and 1698 being unusual.<sup>398</sup>

### 5.9 The Chaplain in the Fort

If Récollets shifting from one property to another is not sufficiently confusing, then the factor of the Récollet assigned to chaplaincy duty in the fort should create enough of a tangle for even the most patient scholar. Casting back to the conflict between Governor Parat and the Récollets when the Franciscans first established their mission in Plaisance, the problem of adequately serving both garrison and colonists was a significant divisive factor between friars and secular authorities.<sup>399</sup> This same problem recurred in later years, with disputes occurring as to the most effective way to allocate the religious resources to provide sufficiently for all. Given the priorities of the secular authorities of that period, the garrison chapel was generally seen as more important, as most governors were judged firstly on their abilities to maintain the defences of the colony and secondly on their rapport with the colonists.

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<sup>398</sup> Their inclusion in 1694 may have been designed to demonstrate to the Ministry and the King de Brouillan's good deeds in providing the Récollets with ample property, while the 1698 mention is of another sort entirely, being merely a reference in the entry on another inhabitant.

<sup>399</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189. Parat au ministre, Du fort de Plaisance le 4 septembre 1689. See Appendix A.9.

The forts were relocated with alarming frequency during the early years of the Plaisance settlement.<sup>400</sup> In the 1670s, the Old Fort sat stolidly on the hill overlooking the beach in Plaisance.<sup>401</sup> This fort was served by the Récollets of Saint-Denis upon their arrival in the community in 1689. As is evident from the illustration, the fort lay across the mouth of the Northeast River from the beach on which the Récollets lived. Further, it was located quite far up a hill, a feature which made it well-suited to its purpose, but inhibited access to and from the rest of the colony. In 1690, after the English raid, de Costebelle effected the construction of a wooden-walled structure that surrounded the church and some of the houses and was designed as a temporary measure to offset further attacks.<sup>402</sup> This fort was located on the beach and likely evinced no conflicts of accessibility, both by virtue of its location and the fact that the presence of the Récollets during this time was dubious.

With the arrival of de Brouillan in 1691, the fortification of Plaisance was undertaken in the form of Fort Louis, a fort which was located on the smaller

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<sup>400</sup> Proulx, *Histoire militaire*. For further discussion of the older fortifications, the reader is referred to Jean-Pierre Proulx, "Le 'Vieux Fort' de Plaisance," Manuscript Report Number 107, Miscellaneous Historical Reports on Sites in the Atlantic Provinces (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1970) 235-245 and Frederick J. Thorpe, *Fish, Forts and Finance: The Politics of French Construction at Placentia, 1699-1710*, Unpublished manuscript (St. John's, NF: s.n., 1971).

<sup>401</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 1. "Plan de la Rade Et du Port de Plaisance En l'Isle de Terre Neufve.

<sup>402</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 3. "Plane De L'anclos de Plaisance"; Proulx, *Histoire militaire*, 26, 34.

beach of Plaisance, just below the area on which the later Fort Royale was built.<sup>403</sup> This fort was again across the water from the main beach, although its presence on lower ground likely improved accessibility sufficiently so that the Récollets were able to commute between their monastery and the fort with relative ease. Fort Louis contained a chapel, designed primarily for the use of the soldiers and military leaders of the garrison and serviced by the Récollets of the colony.

After de Brouillan's construction of the new garrison chapel and his having furnished it with a wide array of church ornaments and objects useful to the chaplain serving the fort, the issue of how the chaplain was to interact with the soldiers came to the fore once again. For the first nine years of the mission of the Récollets of Saint-Denis, any Récollet serving as chaplain to the fort appears to have lived with his fellow friars. This was likely a cost-saving measure as well as an assurance that the Récollet kept suitable company in his spare time. Gradually, however, the secular authorities became more concerned with maintaining religious life in the garrison, as is evidenced by de Brouillan's development of a chapel within the fort. With a corresponding increase in the numbers of Récollets in Plaisance, it became more feasible to request a Récollet specifically for the fort, as there were others available to carry out the duties of *cure* to the inhabitants of Plaisance and the surrounding areas. In 1698,

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<sup>403</sup> Proulx, *Histoire militaire*, 35.

therefore, a Récollet was assigned to the fort to live in the cell there and to attend to the spiritual needs of the soldiers.<sup>404</sup> The Récollet assigned to the fort and destined to reside there was not permitted to leave without authorisation and was certainly discouraged from spending nights away from his cell.<sup>405</sup> When two of the three Récollets left the colony with Goyer in 1700, the only chaplain left remained to serve the fort and resided there.<sup>406</sup>

In 1698, Félix Pain was assigned to the post of fort chaplain, an assignation which does not appear to have suited the secular authorities well. In fact, the ensuing conflict seems to have been among the most traumatic religious events in Plaisance. The series of problems found by de Costebelle and de Monic with Félix Pain reverberated into the next century as an example of the problems of the garrison chaplain living in the fort. The complaints began in the fall of 1698, quite soon after the decision had been made that the Récollet assigned to the fort chaplaincy must reside there.<sup>407</sup> Apparently Félix Pain did not meet the

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<sup>404</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-1, 96. A Versailles, le 26 mars 1698. A M. de Villebon. See Appendix A.28.

<sup>405</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 170. Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698. See Appendix A.30.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>407</sup> The decision was made during April of 1698, after having been verified by the Bishop of Quebec. AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-1, 96. A Versailles, le 26 mars 1698. A M. de Villebon. See Appendix A. 28.; AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-2, 131. The complaints of de Costebelle began in November of that same

standards of de Costebelle, offending the moral sensibilities of the latter by staying away from his cell and associating with women more than de Costebelle believed was becoming for a chaplain.<sup>408</sup> Pain's actions were not precisely immoral, but certainly leaned away from providing the impeccable example de Costebelle was hoping for from the Franciscan friars.

Matters were brought before the Superior of the Plaisance mission by de Costebelle, who wrote demanding that the Superior discipline his friar. De Costebelle further states that if the Superior were not present within the colony, he, de Costebelle, would have taken it upon himself much sooner to put an end to the chaplain's abuses.<sup>409</sup> De Costebelle's esteem for the Superior appears to have been high, as he commended the dignity and swiftness of the Superior's response to the complaint. Apparently the recalcitrant monk was brought before his superior and chastened, after which Pain sought out de Costebelle and pleaded

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year. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 170-171. A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698. See Appendix A.30.

<sup>408</sup> "Le religieux que le supérieur des Récollets de Plaisance nous a donné pour servir la chapelle du roi dans le fort, après avoir goûté l'air du pays, étant dans un âge où il ne serait pas défendu à une personne d'un état différent de celui d'un Récollet de donner dans une coterie agréable, s'est mêlé imprudemment parmi celle de quelques femmes, qui l'ont entraîné à faire ici plusieurs démarches contraires à celles d'un bon exemple, sans aucun crime apparent que celui de chercher l'occasion d'y tomber et d'avoir découché quelquefois du fort où sa cellule est jointe à l'église." AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 170. Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698. See Appendix A.30.

<sup>409</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 170. Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698. See Appendix A.30.

with him to soften the anger of the superior. After an evening of contemplation and discussion between Pain and the Superior, they went before de Costebelle requesting that those who had uttered accusations against Pain be brought to justice. De Costebelle's response was that all who had ears and eyes had been able to voice accusations and that he himself was among them. According to de Costebelle, the friars had succeeded in twisting and poisoning the simplest and most ordinary affairs, some of which, he states, are as delicate and important as religion itself.<sup>410</sup>

From this text, it is evident that the quarrel between the two went much deeper than simple professional criticisms, however, as a rather heated conflict of personalities erupted into an inability to work together for the spiritual good of the colony. The reference on the part of de Costebelle towards a certain delicacy of affairs implies that there was something occurring within either the fort or colony, which he would rather not have spelled out plainly. The letter ended by de Costebelle stating that

Ceux que le religieux accusé de m'avoir rapporté ces faits ont été menacés des fulminations de l'Eglise, d'être éloignés des Sacrements; je puis protester qu'il n'en saurait citer de plus coupables que lui, et ces désordres ne cessent jamais dans ce pays si l'on

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<sup>410</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 2, 171. Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698. Appendix A.30.



accorde un prêtre séculier en place pour servir  
d'aumônier dans le fort.<sup>411</sup>

De Costebelle's disenchantment with the Récollets follows the trend present throughout much of Plaisance's religious history; when served by secular or no clergy, the authorities often sought Récollets, but whenever conflict arose between governors or fort commanders and Récollets, requests were immediately placed for secular clergy.

Reports of the dispute filtered slowly back to the Ministry in France, who immediately dispatched a letter to the Bishop of Quebec.<sup>412</sup> The French crown appears to have been somewhat concerned about the situation and does not seem to have wholly believed de Costebelle's testimony, as their recommendation to Saint-Vallier was that he investigate the situation discreetly, perhaps replacing Pain with another chaplain simply for the sake of maintaining peace and avoiding scandal.<sup>413</sup>

From this perspective, de Costebelle does not appear entirely innocent in the exchange. In fact, suspicion is cast upon his actions by both his own unwillingness to detail the actions which outraged Pain and the crown's obvious

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<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>412</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-2, 213. A Versailles, le 27 mai 1699. A M. l'Evesque de Quebec. Appendix A.31.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*

impressions that something was not altogether ethical or honest in de Costebelle's actions.<sup>+14</sup>

This conflict with de Costebelle was immediately followed by the appointment of a new governor, Joseph de Monic, with whom the Récollets experienced a similar strife. De Monic appeared to have been cut from the same cloth as de Costebelle in many ways and had a reaction to Félix Pain markedly similar to that of the garrison commander. De Monic reported that in one conversation with Pain, the latter spoke in such a ridiculous manner that the governor had to throw the young friar out of the house.<sup>+15</sup> De Monic is suspiciously silent on what precisely was said that offended him so.

The issue of whether Pain would live in the fort or in the convent was, in fact, a non-issue for the latter portion of his time as garrison chaplain. The Récollets of Saint-Denis had essentially abandoned the mission, leaving Pain alone as the last representative of his order.<sup>+16</sup> There was no need for him to

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<sup>+14</sup> In fact, de Costebelle was guilty of many of the same transgressions committed by other secular authorities such as de Brouillan, including having fed his own domestics as well as sixteen or seventeen fishermen in his employ with the food and resources destined for the soldiers of the fort. As well, they were often guilty of seizing a proportion of the catches of the inhabitants and selling the wine sent over for the use of soldiers. Daitherre, "Mémoire" *MSRC*, 1(1894): 177.

<sup>+15</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 187. De Monic au Ministre, le 27 octobre 1701. See Appendix B.7.

<sup>+16</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 37r-38v. Le Sr. de Costebelle au Ministre, le 8 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.34; AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol 3, 39-42. Le Sr. Monic au Ministre, le 30 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.35.

leave the fort to reside in the convent as there were no other monks with whom he could keep company. The dilemma of where the garrison chaplain was to live thus died for several years, later to re-emerge with the arrival of the Récollets of Brittany.

#### 5.10 The Departure of the Récollets of Saint-Denis

In 1700, the Récollet mission in Plaisance was dwindling quickly. The combination of difficulties in financing such an enterprise as well as the isolation of the post meant that finding recruits willing to assume such a position was a challenge. Further, the colony had suffered numerous attacks and setbacks of a wide variety throughout the years, features which impeded the growth of the colony and thereby affected the income and growth of the mission. Additionally, the fragmentary nature of settlement patterns in Newfoundland meant that one man was virtually required to be in seven places at once, or at the very least to maintain adequate contact throughout the year with his widespread charges. The population numbers alone did not demand more than one or two priests, but the location of the population required supplementary numbers to make successful work possible.

In 1700, the Récollets from the Province of Saint-Denis abandoned their mission in a two-step process. Olivier Goyer, Provincial Commissioner of the Récollets in Canada, travelled to Plaisance, where it is recorded that he removed

all of the Récollets save one from the mission.<sup>417</sup> The lone remaining Récollet was Felix Pain who, according to a letter of Joseph de Monic, remained to keep charge of the Plaisance missions.<sup>418</sup> The intention of the Récollets of Saint-Denis to abandon the mission in Plaisance was remarked upon by de Monic after Goyer's visit.<sup>419</sup> Even though Félix Pain remained in Fort Louis, the Parisian Récollets essentially left Plaisance with Goyer.

Precisely why they left the Plaisance parish after so many years of struggle has never truly been examined with due care.<sup>420</sup> It is certain that the conflicts with de Costebelle and later de Monic influenced their decision to leave Plaisance, but other influences factored into the decision as well. Included among these factors along with the personality clashes between friars and secular leaders must have been the lower proportion of Récollets to inhabitants and an increased need for chaplains in the French army.

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<sup>417</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 37r-38v. Le Sr. de Costebelle au Ministre, le 8 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.34.

<sup>418</sup> AC, Series C11C, vol 3, 61. Le Sr. Monic au Ministre, le 30 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.35; AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 187. Monic au ministre. Plaisance, le 27 novembre 1701. See Appendix B.7.

<sup>419</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol 3, 41. Le Sr. Monic au Ministre, le 30 septembre, 1700. See Appendix A.35.

<sup>420</sup> In fact, the only author who offers an explanation of the course of events is Archange Godbout, "Le Père Félix Pain," *La Revue Franciscaine*, June, 1887, 255-256, who views the abandonment solely as the result of the conflicts between the Récollets and secular authorities such as de Costebelle and de Monic.

The constant struggle to find religious willing to live and serve the colony of Plaisance did not end with the rebuilding of the Parisian Récollets' mission there in 1692. Finding sufficient numbers of friars to tend to the needs of both inhabitants and soldiers in the far-flung reaches of the parish was quite difficult. Given the growth of the colony over time, it is reasonable to conclude that an increased number of chaplains and *cures* would have been necessary to tend to their spiritual needs. Throughout New France a similar trend was to be seen, for although during the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries both population and clerical numbers grew, the former by far outpaced the latter, with the end result being a decreased proportion of clergy to colonists.<sup>421</sup> Plaisance was no different, and the Récollets likely found it a stretch to fill this parish as well as the other missions within their jurisdiction. The chief reason for their abandonment as put forth by a letter written in 1716 adds another set of factors to the fray, as it stated that the Récollets of Saint-Denis abandoned the Plaisance mission because they were needed by the king for army service.<sup>422</sup>

During the early years of the settlement of Ile Royale, the secular leaders there were faced with a difficult problem. The Récollets serving Acadia were from the Province of Saint-Denis, while those accompanying the resettled

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<sup>421</sup> Eccles, "The Role of the Church," 29.

<sup>422</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 141-142. Isle Royale, Conseil Eglise, le 28 mars 1716. See Appendix B.37.

colonists from Newfoundland were of the Province of Brittany. The church council of Ile Royale was therefore faced with the problem of determining either which group of Récollets ought to stay or how an arrangement could be worked between the two so that the colonists' needs could be satisfied with a minimum of ecclesiastical squabbling. This matter was not only examined internally, but also by the bishops of both Quebec and France as well as by the secular authorities in New France and the Old World. The result of the negotiations and discussions is a series of letters, some of which examined the vices and virtues of the two respective provinces of Récollets. Among these were letters in which the opinions of the inhabitants of Newfoundland were delineated with regards to the two groups of Récollets they had experienced. Certain caveats must, of course, be kept in mind due to the passage of some fifteen years between the time in which the letter was written and the memories described therein as well as a decided intent on the part of the letter writers of Ile Royale to convince authorities of their various positions. The information contained in these letters, however, does shed some light on both the reasons for the departure of the Parisian Récollets from Plaisance in 1701 and the resultant opinions of the colonists towards the friars.

The letter states that while the Récollets in Plaisance were not required to serve as army chaplains, their province furnished many friars.<sup>423</sup> The implication

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<sup>423</sup> "...mais comme ils ne fournissoient point de sujets pendant la guerre etans obligés d'en donner beaucoup pour les armées on fut obligé d'avoir recours aux Recolets de Bretagne, ces premiers laissant cette mission comme abandonnée."

is that the Récollets of Paris suffered a dramatic depletion in their numbers because of the demands placed upon their province by the French crown preceding and during the War of the Spanish Succession. The Crown had difficulties in finding the necessary number of trained army and navy chaplains and often called upon the various orders, such as the Franciscans, to fill in the breach.<sup>424</sup> Thus the withdrawal of Récollets in 1700 by Provincial Commissioner Goyer was possibly due to a decreased availability of Récollets for the role of missionary to such places as Plaisance. Leaving Félix Pain behind can either indicate that they did not intend to fully abandon the mission, or, as likely, they were leaving one of their number to fill the army chaplain role as they were required to do elsewhere. Removing all of the Récollets from the mission would have defeated the purpose of supplying garrisons and navies with chaplains during the time of impending war. The *curés* supplied to the general populace could be removed, however, to be relocated for other service where needed.

In 1715, de Costebelle noted to the Church Council of Ile Royale that it was his experience that the Récollets of Brittany were better suited to remain as missionaries in Ile Royale by virtue of their associations with the people

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AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 142. Isle Royale, Conseil Eglise, le 28 mars 1716. See Appendix B.37.

<sup>424</sup> Varachaud, "La formation," 67.

therein.<sup>425</sup> De Costebelle says that while both provinces of Récollets demonstrated an equal zeal for their work, the Récollets of Brittany appeared to get along better with the fishermen and inhabitants than did the Récollets of Saint-Denis.<sup>426</sup> To these latter he attributes great oratorical skills and persuasive preaching, but says that the Récollets of Brittany have greater popular appeal,

...la Province de Paris auxquels il faut accorder  
l'Eloquence et le Don de persuader; mais on ne peut  
refuser aux autres un zelle apostolique populaire et  
inimitable pour les courses assidües et fatiguants,  
qu'ils sont obligés de faire dans tous les Havres qui est  
un penible exercise...<sup>427</sup>

It appears from the opinions of de Costebelle and the struggle put up by the leaders on behalf of the inhabitants who came from Plaisance that the Récollets of Saint-Denis were never quite forgiven for abandoning their mission, nor were they esteemed by the people quite as much as were the Bretons.

From this composite group of factors comes a clearer picture of why precisely the Récollets from Saint-Denis left Plaisance in 1701. In actual fact,

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<sup>425</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 142-143. Isle Royale, Conseil Eglise, le 28 novembre 1715. See Appendix B.36.

<sup>426</sup> "Il [de Costebelle] represente sur cela que ceux de la Province de Bretagne conuiennent mieux aux habitants et Equipages que ceux de la Province de Paris..." AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 142v-143. Isle Royale, Conseil Eglise, le 28 novembre 1715. See Appendix B.37.

<sup>427</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 143. Isle Royale, Conseil Eglise, le 28 novembre 1715. See Appendix B.36.



they essentially departed in 1700, but left Félix Pain to mind the fort, as it were. When it became evident that they were unable to spare further men for the mission, the king requested of the Provincial of the Récollets of Brittany some men to serve the Plaisance mission. Replacing the garrison chaplain was likely done for the sake of politics, given Pain's associations with de Costebelle and de Monic. Also, it was easier to maintain one consolidated group of Récollets in the parish rather than pieces of two provinces. Finally, the heated conflict between the secular authorities in Plaisance and the Récollets, both chaplain and superior alike, dampened the willingness of the Récollets of Saint-Denis to stretch their resources sufficiently to tend the Plaisance mission. It is possible that they could have found one or two men who could have been assigned to Newfoundland, but relations with the governor and garrison commander were strained to the breaking point, leaving the Récollets unwilling to accommodate, even if it had been possible to do so.

### 5.11 Conclusions

The Récollets of Saint-Denis thus abandoned and were replaced in a mission they had struggled quite arduously to construct over a period of eleven years. Constant threats of war, a superfluity of raids and fighting, as well as problems of obtaining both supplies and funding meant that Plaisance was not a particularly stable parish, economically or militarily. Politically, it does not appear to have been much better, with the climate of the colony changing with

the personality of its governor. Plaisance fluctuated between periods of religious disinterest and renewal on the part of the governors, leaving the Récollets to provide a stabilising influence on the colony. Unfortunately, the demands placed upon their Province by the other missions in New France as well as their duties as military chaplains limited the numbers of friars which could be sent to Plaisance. Further, the remoteness of the colony from the rest of New France and from France proper meant that problems within the colony very often had to be solved internally, a situation which appears to have led to a festering of personality conflicts.

There was relatively little continuity in the religious life of Plaisance during the seventeenth century. Even after the arrival of the Récollets, the colony was still fraught with the problems of finding willing chaplains for both fort and colony. The fort position appears to have been the more attractive to the order, as it boasted a paid salary which would contribute to the support of the Franciscan group. The income of the *cure* positions was less appealing as it was irregular, leading the Récollets to the reasonable conclusion that it benefitted them financially to fill the fort chaplaincy first. With the fort salary, their mission throughout the Plaisance parish became more stable fiscally. Determining the precise numbers and names of Récollets is virtually impossible, given the available data. It is therefore difficult to determine how

many Récollets served the colony at any one time and what periods were marked by decreased numbers of friars.

Undoubtedly there were Récollets in Plaisance whose names were not recorded during the time in which the colony was served by the Province of Saint-Denis. Attempting to attach names to all of them appears to be an uphill endeavour, as many seem to have been significant for their roles rather than their individual personalities. The case of the Récollets with whom Baron Lahontan spoke during his sojourn in Plaisance in 1693 is a case in point. Lahontan did not record the names of the Récollets, but rather identified them as a group and viewed them in light of their social position and knowledge rather than identifying individuals and their personal characteristics. It can safely be hazarded that while there were periods of religious growth within the colony, Plaisance was not overrun with clergy.

Until the summer of 1701, when the Récollets of Brittany arrived to assume the posts of garrison chaplain and parish priests, Félix Pain remained alone in the fort. It is likely that during this period he was also obliged to tend any pressing spiritual needs on the part of the general populace, but precisely how the last months of the mission of the Récollets of Saint-Denis to Newfoundland were spent was not preserved in the colonial records.

## Chapter Six The Récollets From Brittany, 1701-1714

### 6.1 Introduction

From 1701 until 1715, the Récollets of Brittany served the community of Plaisance as army chaplains, confessors, and civil chaplains. They assumed control of and responsibility for the Plaisance mission in 1701, when requested by the French monarch. During the fifteen years in which they lived among the citizens of Plaisance, the Récollets of Brittany made a strong impression on both the inhabitants and the secular officials. Their distinctive cultural and linguistic backgrounds meshed well with the socio-cultural framework of the populace. They were able to communicate and serve the people of Plaisance with such success that later reports recommended them over and above the Récollets of Saint-Denis.<sup>428</sup> The success of the Plaisance mission rested upon the shoulders of the Breton Récollets and it was with this group that the community formed an indissoluble bond that was to carry through three settlements. Despite the

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<sup>424</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 123, 142-143. Bourbon, le maréchal d'Estrées, au ministre, le 28 novembre, 1715. Isle Royale. See Appendix B.36/. Success, in this usage of the word, implies that the Récollets and the citizens were able to work out a comfortable arrangement for both parties and does not indicate any adherence to specific religious norms as indicated by the Church hierarchy of the period. In other words, the success of the mission depended on whether it worked for both parties involved, not on how the Récollets kept people on the straight and narrow. This distinction becomes important later on as the inhabitants of Plaisance and the Church in Quebec appear to disagree with the suitability and effectiveness of the Récollets of Brittany for the Colonies of Acadia.

importance of the years 1701 through 1715 in forming this cohesion between friars and inhabitants, it has remained largely unresearched and little-analysed. In examining the population of Plaisance, it becomes increasingly apparent that there was more common cultural ground between Breton Récollet and inhabitant than between Parisian friar and colonist. Further, the impact of the cultural and religious assumptions brought to the colony by the Récollets of Brittany would have differed significantly from those with which the Parisians infused their missionary work.

Overall, the 1700s saw fewer events in which the Récollets were recorded as playing any pivotal roles. While there were community-threatening raids and sieges, the colony was more stable than it had been in the past. The disturbances during the early years of the eighteenth century provided fewer recorded occasions for individual heroics on the part of chaplains or *curés*. During this period, Plaisance's commercial and military capabilities flourished, and the colony became a stable and well-fortified base.<sup>429</sup> Neither the Plaisance colony nor its religious life were static, being routinely subject to threats by the English. These situations are not not recorded as having required specifically religious leadership and it was not until the movement of the colony to Ile Royale in 1714 that the Récollets once again returned to political prominence within the colony.

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<sup>429</sup> Humphreys, *Plaisance*, 20.

The colony was presumably well-supplied with friars and fort chaplains, as there were few complaints about a lack of them during the service of the Récollets of Brittany. By contrast, the governors of the colony during the seventeenth century seemed always to be requesting Récollets to fill empty places or to augment the number available. In addition, there are few recorded problems with the service provided by the Récollets of Brittany, and no conflicts between secular authorities and friars appear in the documentary record.

## 6.2 A brief history of the Récollets from Brittany.

The network of reform and jurisdiction is a rather tangled one as applied to the Franciscan order of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. In the ever-lasting cycle of monastic and religious reform and decay, the Franciscan convents underwent significant changes. Many of the convents that succumbed to the reform of the *récollection* during the seventeenth century were Cordelier institutions. The Cordeliers had, in turn, reformed hermitages and other conventual dwellings during their own period of influence.<sup>430</sup>

During the thirteenth century, Franciscan convents were founded throughout Brittany in such locations as Rennes and Nantes. This combination of monasteries formed the Custody of Brittany, a sub-grouping under the

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<sup>430</sup> Heriberto Holzapfel and Gallo Haselbeck, *Manuale Historiae Ordinis Fratrum Minorum* (Friburgi Brisgoviae: Herder, 1909) 313, 447.

jurisdiction of the Province of Touraine.<sup>431</sup> Other convents were established and still more joined the Vicary of Touraine after the reform, from which the Observant strain of the Franciscans emerged.<sup>432</sup> The assorted convents of Brittany were finally granted Provincial status in 1517, under the name of Touraine Pictavienne.<sup>433</sup>

Many of the convents of Brittany began as Cordelier houses and joined the Récollet reform during the early seventeenth century.<sup>434</sup> The series of reforms which gave shape to the Récollets of Brittany are well-illustrated through studying the case of the convent of Césambre, located on an island near St.-Malo. Césambre was originally the residence of a select group of hermits seeking refuge from the influence of the secular world. A series of hermits and anchorites contributed to the construction of a small oratory. In 1468, a group of Cordeliers of the Observance obtained permission from the Bishop of St.-Malo to establish a convent on the island. A church and convent were constructed, as were four

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<sup>431</sup> Raphael M. Huber, *A Documented History of the Franciscan Order: From the Birth of St. Francis to the Division of the Order Under Leo X (1182-1517)* (Milwaukee: Nowiny Publishing Apostolate, 1944) 757.

<sup>432</sup> Maximilian Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires des Frères Mineurs de l'Observance et des Récollets de Bretagne 1476-1780* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1930), iii; Luc Wadding, *Annales minorum*, Second edition, vol. 14 (Rome: s.n., 1736), 417, 597.

<sup>433</sup> Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires*, i.

<sup>434</sup> *Ibid.*, xxx.

small chapels located at the four corners of the island.<sup>435</sup> The following years saw royal endorsements for the Cordeliers of Césambre, and, less beneficially, attacks on the islands by English pirates. Hardships overwhelmed the small group and the numbers dropped off rapidly during the late sixteenth century. In 1612, the Cordeliers of Césambre were replaced by the newly-formed Récollets, but not without a great deal of resistance on the part of the Cordeliers.<sup>436</sup>

The general shift of Césambre from small, informal gatherings of religious to the established groups of Observants or Cordeliers illustrates the contemporary trend among religious in the rest of Brittany. The establishment of the Province of Brittany among the Récollets heralded a shift from the dwindling Cordelier order to the emergent Récollet movement. While the Récollets were also attacked by pirates, they were able to regroup and re-establish their mission at la Roulais.<sup>437</sup> The resilience of the order in the early years of its establishment in Brittany lay at the roots of its success.

In keeping with the life of St. Francis, to which they hearkened back, the Breton Récollets attempted to strike a balance between contemplation and action. The locations of their convents and hospices reflect this duality. The convents of the Récollets in Brittany were generally located in the countryside, at a distance

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<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*, xx.

<sup>436</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi-xxii.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, xxii.



from the cities and general populace. The justification lay in attempting to keep a distance from the secular world in order to allow for the friars' contemplation as well as providing an asylum or retreat for harried scholars and missionaries requiring space in which to seek spiritual solace and rejuvenation.<sup>438</sup>

Quite often, the principal convents were located in isolation, while smaller hospices were maintained in locations conducive to missionary work. Cities such as St.-Malo were choice locations for hospices, as they afforded contact with the vast array of seafaring men and ships while being located close to small, isolated islands and stretches of land on which convents were situated. Plaisance was a fairly heavily populated small town, which bore much resemblance to some of the towns in France ministered by the Breton friars. When the Récollets of Brittany moved to Newfoundland, it was a hospice which was therefore set up to meet the needs of the colony rather than a convent. In this fashion, fewer friars were needed and certain of the formal programmes and organisational structures necessary to a convent were not required. The monks in the hospice were provided by the Provincial Chapter and were sent from Brittany, probably sailing from Port Louis, the only port from which they provided marine chaplains.<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxi.

<sup>439</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-2, 222. A. M. Clairambault. A Versailles le 9 janvier 1709. See Appendix B.28.

### 6.3 Missionary involvement of Brittany Récollets in New France.

Although limited in scope to Plaisance and later Ile Royale, the missionary work of the Breton Récollets in New France assumed greater importance with the rise of Louisbourg to a major military and economic centre. The number of these friars in New France was actually rather small and their missions were limited exclusively to the areas of Plaisance, St. Pierre and Miquelon, the areas of French settlement surrounding Plaisance, and the settlements in Ile Royale which were formed from the population of these places. In the *Tables Capitulaires*, which list the appointments of Récollets to various positions in the different convents and hospices within the Province of Brittany, the establishment in Plaisance was recorded as being a hospice, rather than a full-fledged convent.<sup>440</sup> In 1701, 1703 and 1706, it came last in the list, whereas from 1708 until 1711 it was followed by the hospice of *Sanctae Catherinae*. In 1718, neither Plaisance nor Ile Royale were mentioned, but in 1719, *Insulae Regalis* or Ile Royale took the position in the list previously occupied by Plaisance and was also titled a hospice.<sup>441</sup>

Most recent scholarship examines the influence of the Récollets on the religious life of Ile Royale, as it was in Louisbourg that the colony grew and

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<sup>440</sup> Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires*, 110, 113, 115, 118, 121. The wording varies from “In hospitio Placentino Terrae Novae...” on page 110, to “In hospitio Placentino...” on pages 113 et alia.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*, 124, 127.

became prosperous. Further, there are more records remaining from the period after the establishment in Louisbourg than there are for the earlier years. Recent material dealing with the work and lives of the Récollets of Brittany during the last fifteen years of the French Newfoundland colony is virtually non-existent, as the scholarly tendency has been to discuss the formative years of the Plaisance mission, delineating its establishment and the immediate reaction of the populace. Most accounts neglect to deal with the Récollets after 1692, with the consequence that the Récollets of Saint-Denis are only partially addressed and those of Brittany remain underrepresented. There are several reasons for this neglect, most of which lie within the scope delineated by researchers and the availability of archival materials.

Beginning with Hugolin Lemay and Odoric Jouve and continuing on into the twentieth century, many students of the involvement of the Friars Minor in New France have emerged. Lemay and Jouve examined almost exclusively the missionary pursuits of the Récollets of Saint-Denis and their part in the cultural life of New France. This naturally reflects both their own allegiances and the ease with which they were able to obtain sources. While Lemay, for instance, documents the religious life of Plaisance during the time of the Récollets of Saint-Denis, he ends his account in 1701 with the mention that it was in that year that the Breton monks took over the mission.<sup>442</sup> His later two articles dealing with the

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<sup>442</sup> Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, 20.

Récollets of Brittany are primarily focussed upon the roles of these men in Ile Royale, although some nominal mention is made of the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance.<sup>443</sup> The publication of Jouve's research reveals a somewhat more inclusive perspective, as it incorporates short biographical sketches of friars from a variety of French Franciscan provinces, including that of Brittany.<sup>444</sup>

Primary documentation on the Récollets of Brittany and their involvement in French Newfoundland religious life is available, but in a somewhat sporadic form. The documents embrace three basic issues in the religious life of the community, namely the financial aspects of their mission, the establishment of the Breton friars and their subsequent conduct, and the later move to Ile Royale from Plaisance. The sources which address these issues are generally the colonial records and the remnants of the records of the Breton Franciscans, although these latter are by no means complete. The parish records maintained by the Récollets of Brittany during their stay in Plaisance appear not to have survived, depriving researchers of a potentially rich source of information about the religious life of Plaisance.

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<sup>443</sup> Lemay, "Table nominale," 99-100, and "Les Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis et ceux de la Province de Bretagne," passim.

<sup>444</sup> Odoric-Marie Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique des Récollets missionnaires en Nouvelle-France, 1615-1645, 1670-1849*. With the collaboration of de Archange Godbout, Hervé Blais, et René Bacon (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1996).

It must be remembered that while the Récollets of Brittany played significant roles in the missions to Plaisance and Ile Royale, their overall importance in the religious life of New France was not comparable to that of other provinces. The Récollets of Brittany were minor figures in Acadian history and consequentially very little has been published on their involvement in religious life of the colonies.

The most notable role of these friars was in the colonial town of Louisbourg, and it is in this context that they are most commonly mentioned and understood. Apart from their mission in Louisbourg, which A.J. Johnson so admirably documents and interprets in *Religion in Life at Louisbourg*,<sup>445</sup> their only missionary endeavour was that of the town of Plaisance, which they assumed in 1701 after the withdrawal of the Récollets of Saint-Denis. The Plaisance mission is both poorly documented and studied, with most accounts of the religious life of the colonists either beginning, as does Johnson, with the move in 1715 to Ile Royale, or ending in 1700 with the departure of the Parisian Récollets.<sup>446</sup> From the years 1701 to 1715, while there is reasonable quantity of archival records, little analysis of the religious life of Plaisance has been

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<sup>445</sup> A. John Johnson, *Religion in Life at Louisbourg 1713-1758* (Kingston and Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984).

<sup>446</sup> While thorough in what it explores, Hugolin Lemay's *L'Etablissement des Récollets... à Plaisance*, for instance, does not go far beyond the turn of the century. Further, his work has served as the basis for many further studies, including the publication of Jouve's researches and the study of Raymond Lahey.

conducted. In a sense, therefore, the research foundations laid by Lemay, and his contemporary Jouve, have remained the basis of information for all subsequent studies in the area. Unfortunately, few scholars have sought to continue beyond these foundations, with the result being a repetition of information which Jouve and Lemay proposed as principally a solid beginning rather than a final conclusion.

The lack of scholarly writing in the field is understandable to a certain degree, given the difficulty in finding sources and the tendency of those sources to describe events rather than names. The parish records of Plaisance and the first ten years of life in the new colony at Ile Royale have not survived, nor have many of the records kept by the Breton Récollets. As is generally the case in most historical fields, the documentary evidence becomes more abundant the further forward one travels in time. The difficulty in finding primary sources is also partially due to the abbreviated length of the Récollets' stay in Plaisance, as well as their relative insignificance in New France as a whole. This, combined with the affiliation of nineteenth-century scholars to the Quebec and Parisian roots of the order has led to a general disinterest in scholarly work on the Breton Récollets in Newfoundland.

#### **6.4 Plaisance and Brittany - the Sources**

There are several sources from which information concerning the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance can be drawn, among the most important being

the colonial letters between the secular officials and the French ministry, the records of the Breton Récollets, and the records of Ile Royale during the period 1715 through to 1735. The records maintained by the Récollets of Brittany are rather sparse and lack a great deal of detail. Those which mention the Plaisance mission are generally chapter meetings, in which the elected officials of the order, province and individual houses are listed. What such records do provide, however, is a chronological framework into which to place information gleaned from other sources. The colonial letters, for instance, rarely mention the names of the Franciscans, but often mention their roles in various events. The *Table Capitulaires* of the Breton Récollets enable scholars to place the events in which the friars from Brittany participated in context and, perhaps, to assign names to those to whom reference is made. In many ways, these sources echo those from which information regarding the Parisian Récollets was gleaned, as the colonial and monastic records are standard sources for such research.

The most intriguing source of information pertaining to the Plaisance Récollets are the records kept in Ile Royale regarding the status of the Récollets of Brittany and those of Saint-Denis. With the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the majority of the citizens of Plaisance and the Islands of St. Pierre moved to Ile Royale in the hopes of establishing a new stronghold with which to protect their mercantile and fishing interests.<sup>447</sup> After the colony was established and

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<sup>447</sup> J. S. McLennan, *Louisbourg From Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758*, Reprint of 1918 edition, (Sydney: Fortress Press, 1969), 1.

grew to include people from other parts of the Atlantic region, there arose a dispute between the Récollets of Saint-Denis and those of Brittany. The Parisian Récollets were the more-solidly established in New France and traditionally served the Acadian citizens, while the Breton Récollets had moved with the Plaisance settlers. The details of the dispute are well-defined in the works of both Lemay and Johnston and do not bear repeating in full in this thesis.<sup>448</sup> Suffice it to say that the quarrel of jurisdiction led to an airing of the grievances of each group against the other and that the sentiments of the people of Plaisance regarding the two groups were made quite clear in colonial correspondence.<sup>449</sup> Further, the particulars regarding the replacement of the Récollets of Paris by those of Brittany are detailed by officials such as Pastour de Costebelle, who served in both Plaisance and Ile Royale.

### 6.5 The Establishment

In 1700, Joseph de Monic wrote to the ministry of the problems experienced in Plaisance on account of the lack of chaplains and *cures*.<sup>450</sup> In

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<sup>448</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 23-26; Lemay " Les Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis et ceux de la Province de Bretagne."

<sup>449</sup> Johnston documents the colonial correspondence quite clearly in *Religion in Life*, 24-25.

<sup>450</sup> "On n'entrouve point qui veullent aller en ces pays pour 300#." AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 127v. De Monic. Le 22 octobre, 1700. See Appendix A.36.



response, the ministry wrote back that the mission must be filled and that due to the difficulties in finding suitable candidates, a letter had been sent to the Provincial of the Récollets of Brittany, in the hopes that they might assume responsibility for the mission.<sup>451</sup> The lack of ecclesiastics was recognised as a problem by both bishop and monarch, with both being concerned about the spiritual well-being of troops and inhabitants.<sup>452</sup> A letter was written to de Monic, then governor of Plaisance, indicating that the king was approaching the Superior of the Récollets of Brittany about the possibility of that province furnishing chaplains and *cures* to Plaisance.<sup>453</sup> In this letter, it is made clear that the option of secular clergy was considered, but then dropped in favour of the Récollets of Brittany.<sup>454</sup> In fact, these Récollets appear to have been a last resort, as finding religious willing to live in Newfoundland for a small sum of money was very difficult.

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<sup>451</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 129. Au Sr. de Monic. c. 1701. See Appendix B.2

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>454</sup> "Il [l'Eveque de Québec] ne croit pas qu'on puisse trouver des prestres seculiers qui veüillent s'y aller establir ny en ayant pas assez pour les autres Colonies, mais il fait espérer que le Provincial des Récollets de la Province de Bretagne pourroit se charger de vous envoyer le nombre suffisant de Religieux..." AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 22-3, 129-130. Au Sr. de Monic, c1701. See Appendix B - 2.

In April of 1701, de Monic was the recipient of another letter from the crown, in which the results of the king's efforts to interest the Superior of the Province of Brittany in the Newfoundland mission were made known. A portion of the letter describing the conclusion reached reads as follows,

... Le Roy a chargé le Provincial des Récollets de Bretagne d'envoyer a Plaisance trois Religieux de son ordre; scavoir un pour faire les fonction d'aumosnier dans le fort, et les deux autres de Curez des habitans. Sa Majesté desire que vous les establissiez et que vous les teniez le main a ce qu'on leur paye les retributions qu'ils ont accoustumé d'avoir, et a ce que la garnison et les habitans ayent pour eux les esgards qui sont deux a leur caractère...<sup>455</sup>

Three Récollets were to be sent to Plaisance in that same year. On 23 July 1701 Charles Mauduit was named the Superior of their hospice, as is recorded in the *Tables Capitulaires* of the Récollets of Brittany.<sup>456</sup> Accompanying Mauduit was Père Antonin Baudron, later referred to as Père Antonin in the colonial records.<sup>457</sup> According to one document, he served a portion of his ministry on the

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<sup>455</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 149. Au Sr. de Monic. A Versailles le 13 avril 1701. See Appendix B.5.

<sup>456</sup> Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires*, liii and 110. The entry on Mauduit's appointment is found on the latter page and reads, "In hospitio Placentino Terrae Novae, V.P. Carolus Mauduit, sacrae theologiae lector, superior nominatur."

<sup>457</sup> P. René Bacon mentions that Baudron was one of the Récollets who travelled to Plaisance in 1701, along with Mauduit, in the entry "Père Antonin Baudron," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 30. This conclusion appears to have been drawn from the colonial records pertaining to Newfoundland and St. Pierre. On Septembre 25, 1701, Père Antonin wrote a letter to the ministry complaining of

islands of St. Pierre.<sup>458</sup> If the letter written by the French crown is correct in specifying that three Récollets were sent, there was one other unnamed Récollet who travelled with these two to Plaisance.

The records did not mention where these Récollets resided, although it is possible that they occupied the residence so recently vacated by their confreres of Saint-Denis. When they arrived, the situation facing them was quite different from that with which Joseph Denis and Xiste LeTac were forced to deal in 1689. The population had grown from 347 men, women and children in 1693 to 577 in 1711, and had changed from a settlement of men whose wives and families remained in France to one in which more families had put down roots.<sup>459</sup> Children and women were a part of Plaisance life, although they certainly did not factor significantly in the colonial records, which were primarily concerned with the fishery and military. Whereas the initial Récollet establishment had been occupied with one church and garrison service, the Breton friars found two chapels and a parish church within the Plaisance colony, as well as the several

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the problems he was having in his community. This letter has been lost, but the contents of it can be reconstructed through the use of a report made by the Ministry to the Bishop of Quebec. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-213v. 1701. Extrait des Lettres de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terre-Neuve. Le Père Antonin Relig<sup>x</sup> Recolé aux Isles S<sup>t</sup>. Pierre le 25 7<sup>bre</sup> [1701]. See Appendix B.3.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>459</sup> 1693 and 1711 census data. These numbers are drawn from the census data from those two years and included the hired men as well as the residents and their families.

outlying churches which had subsisted from earliest settlement onwards. As with their predecessors, they were responsible not only for the religious nourishment of the general populace and military of the community, but also for the churches in St. Pierre and other outlying French communities. The difference was, however, that the numbers of people with whom they were to deal had grown. In the 1700s, the French colony in Newfoundland had stabilised and was less vulnerable than it had been during its early years. This altered the factors with which the Récollets were obliged to deal, with more time being spent on daily ministry and tending the souls of the sick rather than politicking during military campaigns or dealing with the wounded and dying during raids.

As was often the case in more solidly-established colonies, the focus in Plaisance shifted from one of dealing with crisis after crisis to an effort at organising daily life and maintaining a certain standard of religious activity and behaviour. An undated document designed to service as a set of guidelines for Subercase, governor of Plaisance from 1702 to 1706, provides further details concerning the Récollets in Plaisance and how they were to be treated by the state.<sup>460</sup> Subercase was told that there were four Récollets serving in Plaisance, one of whom was responsible for the fort, another for St. Pierre, and the

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<sup>460</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-3, 21-24. *Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terrebonne et du Fort Louis de Plaisance.* Appendix B.1.

remaining two for the inhabitants of the parish.<sup>461</sup> The governor's role in assuring the religious morality of the community in conjunction with the Récollets was laid out, although precise details as to how he was to maintain religious sentiment and enforce feast and holy days were suspiciously absent.

The issue of enforcing religious holidays and festivals was a strain that ran through much of the history of Plaisance and, indeed, much of the history of New France in general. Popular piety during the seventeenth and eighteenth century in French Catholic territories is a subject of great interest, with scholars often finding in New France a constant struggle to enforce feast and holy days.<sup>462</sup> Often, the sheer amount of time dedicated to eking out a subsistence left little room for other than minimal attendance at ecclesiastical functions, and many treated that time as an occasion for social interaction.<sup>463</sup> The governors of Plaisance were often faced with the difficult problem of forcing recalcitrant members of the colony to tow the line and attend church services. At the very least, they insisted that some measure of decorum be maintained so that those who wished to attend might do so.

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<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>462</sup> Terry Crowley, "The French Regime to 1760," in Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 50-51.

<sup>463</sup> Greer, *The People of New France*, 35-36.

In 1693, de Brouillan complained that a group of men from the fishing crew of Sr. Joubert elected, at the instigation of their master, to saw planks outside of the church door during mass and for the rest of the day following. When the governor arrived for vespers, he encountered Joubert and subsequently arrested six of his men. Brouillan was only able to keep them under lock and key for one day, however, or else Joubert's commercial dealings would have been significantly damaged.<sup>464</sup> Situations such as this were reported by Père Antonin in his letter to the ministry, and it is quite likely that there was a constant stream of impious actions with which both secular and religious authorities were forced to deal.<sup>465</sup> From Antonin's report, it does not appear that tendencies towards religious observance improved significantly within the first few years of the assumption of the Plaisance parish by the Récollets of Brittany. Poor Mass attendance on Sundays and feast days as well as ignorance with regards to the fundamentals of the Roman Catholic faith were issues with which that particular Récollet had to contend.<sup>466</sup> While St. Pierre was certainly

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<sup>464</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 427. De Brouillan au Ministre. Au Fort Louis de Plaisance, le 7 octobre 1693. See Appendix A.38.

<sup>465</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-213v. 1701. Extrait des Lettres de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terre-Neuve. Le Père Antonin Relig<sup>x</sup> Recolé aux Isles S<sup>t</sup>. Pierre le 25 7<sup>bre</sup> [1701]. See Appendix B.3.

<sup>466</sup> "Il supplie aussy d'ordonner aux habitants que la plus part n'ont aucune teinture de religion d'assister à la messe les dimanches et les jours des principales fêtes fin qu'il puisse trouver quelque temps pour les instruire." AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213v. 1701. Extrait des Lettres de Plaisance en l'Isle de

distanced from the capital, Plaisance, it appears likely that similar sorts of problems plagued most of the towns which composed the parish.

## **6.6 Finances and Property**

In examining the records of any religious group, the financial aspects always seem to attract the most paper and attention. During the first three years of the eighteenth century, the religious records of Plaisance, insofar as they related to the Récollets, were almost entirely preoccupied with the problem of providing the Récollets of Brittany with both the pay due to them and the additional funds they requested.

The king's letter of 1701 not only established the right of the Récollets of Brittany to set up a mission, but also mentioned the financial dues to which the Récollets were entitled.<sup>467</sup> The Récollets of Saint-Denis had been partially subsidised by the crown, but the bulk of their income was derived from donations on the part of inhabitants.<sup>468</sup> This system appears to have been unique in New France, as most regions operated on a tithe system, in which a fixed

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Terre-Neuve. Le Père Antonin Relig<sup>x</sup> Recolé aux Isles S<sup>t</sup>. Pierre le 25 7<sup>bre</sup> [1701]. See Appendix B.3.

<sup>467</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 22-3, pp. 148-149. Ministre au Sr. de Monic, A Versailles, le 13 avril, 1701. See Appendix B.5.

<sup>468</sup> For further understanding of the nature and place of the donations, the reader is directed to Chapter Three of this thesis.

proportion of the inhabitants' incomes were allocated to the church.<sup>469</sup> This same floating donation system carried over into the Breton missions to Newfoundland, with the two *cures* finding their salaries largely dependant on parishioner opinions of their conduct and usefulness.<sup>470</sup>

Such a system of tithes was familiar to the Breton friars. In Brittany, much of the Récollets' subsistence was gleaned from just such a means, which perhaps explains why they requested a subsidy from the crown prior to taking on the Plaisance mission and how they were able to function with stability within the colony.<sup>471</sup> The cultural background of these friars was also significantly different from that of the Parisian monks. The working population of Brittany was not only composed of farmers and merchants, but of fishermen and people engaged

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<sup>469</sup> During the Laval bishopric, New France's tithe was 1/13 of the crop yields or money gained through labour. Certain concessions were made for individual communities and regions, with some areas being permitted to pay at 1/20. This proportion was later changed to 1/26, a rate which was to be charged for a twenty-year period. Cornelius Jaenen, *The Role of the Church in New France* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976) 84-85.

<sup>470</sup> In *Religion in Life*, Johnston remarks on this system by which the clergy of Plaisance and Ile Royale were supported (22). This system was reputed to have worked quite well in Ile Royale, where the Récollets were able to collect some 4000 livres in 1720. There was some disgruntled feeling on the part of the secular authorities about this, however, as popular opinion stated that the friars sent much of this money to France. In 1715, a tithe of one quintal of cod per chaloupe was instituted, only to be lifted one year later due to the protests raised by fishermen and merchants (34-35).

<sup>471</sup> Martin, "Franciscains bretons," 658-60.



in the maritime trade.<sup>472</sup> As chaplains and villages priests, the Récollets were accustomed to interacting with fishermen and had adapted to surviving by means of the fishery. They were used to ports and maritime areas and had discovered ways of using such locations to their advantage. Hervé Martin expresses the outlook of the Breton friars best, perhaps, when he states that

... la mer, dont on recherche toujours la proximité,  
ne signifie plus solitude, rudesse, subsistance difficile,  
amis au contraire relations, échanges, richesse  
marchande, et en conséquence possible prélèvement  
d'aumônes abondantes.<sup>473</sup>

This contrasts greatly to the attitude of the Parisian friars, who were more accustomed to dealing with farmers and trappers than fishermen. When the Récollets of Saint-Denis moved to Plaisance, they were accustomed to having the right to demand the tithe and were ill-prepared to base their subsistence around such a vastly fluctuating source of income as donations. Further, the lack of substantial funding from the crown meant that even the donation system was laid open to sabotage by the constant stream of raids and other calamities which plagued the colony. The Breton friars moved directly from their convents and hospices in Brittany to Newfoundland and were able to make a smoother transition because of their prior experiences. They knew enough to request a

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<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*, 641.

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*, 648.

regular royal subsidy in advance and were aware of the perils of the financial system into which they were headed.

In addition to the monies gleaned from donations, the Récollets who served as *curés* were each allocated a sum of fifty *livres* per annum by the crown.<sup>474</sup> This sum was specifically requested by the two Récollets sent to serve the community of Plaisance, as they felt that they could not live on the resources collected from the inhabitants.<sup>475</sup> Presumably the *curé*, who was to reside in the service of the inhabitants of St. Pierre, received the same allocation, although no mention was made of it. The chaplain who was sent to serve Fort Louis in the town of Plaisance was accorded a yearly salary of 300 *livres*,<sup>476</sup> theoretically compensating for the lack of donations from parishioners, as his charges were soldiers. The general implications of the allocation of funds were that the Récollets of Brittany were to be accorded four hundred and fifty *livres* per year, as they provided three *curés* and one fort almoner to the parish.

In addition to the regular stipend, the king awarded the Récollets a 200 livre bonus in 1705, which was sent to Rochefort where the Récollets were able

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<sup>474</sup> AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 23-3, fol 21-24. Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terreneuve, et du Fort Louis de Plaisance. See Appendix B.1.

<sup>475</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-4, p. 188. Ministre au Sr. de Monic, A Versailles le 11 mai, 1701. See Appendix B.6.

<sup>476</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 358. A M. Begon. A Versailles, le premier Mars 1702. See Appendix B.11.

to use it as credit to purchase things they needed.<sup>477</sup> A gratuity is also mentioned to have been given along with the regular stipend in 1707 and was passed through Rochefort in much the same way as the previous funds.<sup>478</sup>

In addition to the system of donations, royal funding and other gifts given to the Récollets, they were entitled to charge for certain services performed. For instance, they could charge up to six livres for a funeral, eight for a High Mass, three for the burial of a child.<sup>479</sup> There were also varying fees for the interment of adults, both in the city and in the country. Such fees supplemented the incomes of parish priests across New France. The guidelines were designed to restrict the charges made by the priests to a reasonable amount, which presumably indicates that there were problems with priests charging more than this on occasion. How or whether this fee structure was enforced in Plaisance has not been recorded. Certainly, there are no reports of abuses of that nature.

While monies were owed the Récollets by the crown, actually receiving the benefits proved to be a matter of bureaucratic gymnastics. In October of 1701, the Récollets were accorded four hundred livres from the funds assigned

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<sup>477</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 27-1, 235. A M. Begon. A Marly le 3 May 1705. See Appendix B.17.

<sup>478</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 29-2, 376. Le Ministre au Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne. A Marly le 25 May 1707. See Appendix B.20.

<sup>479</sup> Têtu and Gagnon, *Mandements*. November 9, 1690.

to the fortification of the town.<sup>480</sup> This was apparently in response to the request made by the Récollets upon arriving in Plaisance that their funds be given to them for the purchase of supplies.<sup>481</sup> The difficulty in procuring money from France that late in the season likely rendered this the only viable option. In March of 1702, the ministry reiterated the financial appointment accorded to the friar, which permitted four hundred and fifty livres to be given to the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance for their services that year.<sup>482</sup> Three weeks later, the ministry wrote to de Monic regarding the funds made available to the Récollets the year before, stating that the crown would repay the four hundred livres to the fortification fund.<sup>483</sup>

### 6.7 Refurbishing the Church

In 1702, the church buildings in Plaisance underwent repairs to their structures and exteriors, having fallen into a state of decay through inclement weather and lack of maintenance. L'Hermitte, the engineer sent by the crown to

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<sup>480</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 235. Lettre de Durand de la Garenne au ministre. Plaisance, 5 octobre 1701.

<sup>481</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, p. 199. Monic au Ministre. Plaisance, le 27 novembre 1701. Appendix B.7.

<sup>482</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, p. 358. Ministre a M. Begon. A Versailles. Le premier mars 1702. Appendix B.11.

<sup>483</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, p. 448. Le ministre a M. de Monic. A Versailles, le 22e mars 1702. Appendix B.12.

supervise the improvements of the fortifications in Plaisance, reported that the masons who had recently arrived had been put to work on building the powder house and refinishing the exterior of the church.<sup>484</sup> One month later, Durand la Garenne reported that the carpenters had been at work sawing planks with which to cover the church and the two chapels. Upon further reflection, la Garenne stated that the carpenters were actually working on the lodging of the chaplain, as the church and chapels were covered with stone.<sup>485</sup>

By this time, evidentially, there were three church structures in Plaisance, with two of these being chapels. One chapel was located in Fort Louis, a fortification which was in the course of being supplanted by the newer Fort Royal on the hill overlooking Plaisance. Until 1703, however, Fort Louis was still in constant use and the new hillside fortification was merely an additional support.<sup>486</sup> When the Récollets of Brittany arrived in 1701, they would have seen the foundations of the newest fortification looming on high, but their residence and fort chaplaincy would have been down on the beach. As well as the Fort Louis Chapel, there was a parish church attached to the Récollet property.<sup>487</sup> The

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<sup>484</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, p. 308. L'Hermitte au ministre. A Plaisance, le 29 septembre 1702. Appendix B.38.

<sup>485</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, p. 327. Le Sr. Durand la Garenne au ministre. A Plaisance, le 10 octobre 1702. Appendix B.39.

<sup>486</sup> Proulx, *Histoire militaire*, 26, 34.

<sup>487</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10, Recensement de toute la collonie établie en liste de Terre-neuve et Saint Pierre, le Grand Plaisance et la

location of the third structure, also a chapel, is elusive, although it is possible that by 1702 some sort of new chapel was constructed within Fort Royal. Equally probable, however, is that there was a chapel elsewhere within Plaisance, quite likely in Petit Plaisance, which was considered a part of the parish.

In 1708, the principal church structure is shown as being located on the beach with a cemetery attached. Next to it lies a building which, upon closer inspection of the original image, appears to have a cross mounted on the roof.<sup>488</sup> This position appears to have been maintained until the departure of the Récollets and the French in 1713, as is demonstrated by a British Ordinance map entitled, “A Plan of the Settlement and Fishing Rooms belonging to the French Inhabitants of the Beach at Placentia”.<sup>489</sup> In this map, the church, convent and garden are clearly marked, although the graveyard is not mentioned. It is possible that the graveyard is the afore-mentioned garden, or that it is simply not recorded in the plan.

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premiere coullonne, l'isle de Terre Neuve pour l'année 1694. Also see Appendix C, Figures 6, 7 and 8.

<sup>488</sup> See Appendix C, Figures 6 and 7. “Le Plan du port de P.” 1708. Also see Chapter Five of this thesis for further discussion.

<sup>489</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 8. “A Plan of the Settlement and Fishing Rooms belonging to the French Inhabitants of the Beach at Placentia.” 1713.

## 6.8 Social and Cultural Background

The inhabitants of French Newfoundland and the Récollets of Brittany had more in common than money, however, as certain shared social and cultural features contributed to an understanding between the Breton Franciscans and their spiritual charges. According to the census data collected in 1698, most of the heads of households of Plaisance came from the coastal regions of France, with primary focus falling upon the Poitou-Brittany-Normandy stretch of coastline.<sup>490</sup> Within this category were men from Ile de Ré, Ile d'Oleron, la Rochelle, la Tremblade, Rochefort, St. Malo, Lower Brittany, and Jersey (or Jersey). The remainder of the population hailed from the Basque countries, Quebec, Plaisance, the British Isles, or other parts of France.<sup>491</sup> The places of origin of the women were generally not given, unless they were the head of household, but locations of marriage were, as were numbers of children. On the whole, however, it is difficult to gauge the roots of the female portion of the population and generalisations regarding population statistics must be viewed with caution.

The Franciscans of Brittany, coming from a tradition in which convents were close to the coasts, or even on islands, and in which the majority of the persons with whom they interacted were involved with coastal occupations such

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<sup>490</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*

as trade, shipping, or the fishery, were well-suited to adopting a post such as that in Plaisance. These friars were used to the dialects and habits of the variety of coastal French cultures that existed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the constant influx of this wide array of seafarers to Breton ports such as St.-Malo led to a knowledge on the part of Breton friars of how to communicate with mariners of all types. While this was certainly not true with all of the Récollets of Brittany, many were intimately connected with the sea and knew the traditions of the coastline well.

The issue of how much the Récollets of Brittany held in common with the inhabitants of Plaisance simply by virtue of a similarity in cultural backgrounds shows up best much later in the history of the colony of Plaisance. After the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht by the French in 1713, the colonists of Plaisance and their accompanying Récollets of Brittany moved lock, stock and barrel to Ile Royale, where they were to establish a colony and military stronghold. They eventually settled in what was to be called Louisbourg and other colonists from surrounding areas and other parts of New France joined them, bringing their own religious leaders.<sup>492</sup> The rest of Acadia being served by the Récollets of Saint-Denis, there arose some conflict as to which group would maintain control of the religious life of the colony; Brittany or Saint-Denis. While the vagaries of this lengthy and heated debate go far beyond this thesis, certain features are of

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<sup>492</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 12-13.



considerable interest to an understanding of the relationships both groups had with the inhabitants of Plaisance.<sup>493</sup>

Philippe Pastour de Costebelle, governor of Plaisance at the time of the move to Ile Royale, reported that of the two groups of friars, those of Brittany were preferred over the Récollets of Saint-Denys. His opinion was that while the Parisian Récollets were certainly magnificent orators and quite convincing speakers, they had not that same indefatigable zeal and connection with the inhabitants.<sup>494</sup> Other reports echoed this sentiment, noting that the people of Plaisance preferred the friars from Brittany over those of Paris. The Bretons had maintained an active mission in the colony throughout the last fourteen years of the French occupation of Plaisance and supported the inhabitants in their move to Ile Royale. Further, there seems to have been a connection between friars and inhabitants borne of the commonality of backgrounds in the fishery and an understanding of language and culture.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>493</sup> For a further understanding of the nature and details of this debate, the reader is referred to Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 23-26. Also see Lemay, "Les Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis et ceux de la Province de Bretagne."

<sup>494</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol 123., 142-143. Bourbon, le maréchal d'Estrées, au ministre, le 28 novembre, 1715. Isle Royale. See Appendix B.36. This letter was written concerning the pending decision of the crown of which group of Récollets would be allowed to serve Ile Royale.

<sup>495</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11B, vol. 4, 84-85. Conseil Eglise, 1719.

### **6.9 The Chaplain in the Fort**

During the latter years of the ministry of the Récollets of Saint-Denis, the residence and conduct of the fort chaplain became matters of hot dispute. The Récollets preferred that their friars reside in the convent and travel to the fort, while the secular authorities were of the opinion that he ought to live in the fort proper to best serve its needs.<sup>496</sup> Secular authorities such as Lieutenant de Costebelle and Governor de Monic criticised the behaviour of the garrison chaplain, creating a public havoc that was to haunt future fort chaplains long after their originator had departed. While it was difficult for those in Plaisance to forget conflict between the Récollets of Saint-Denis and the secular leaders, the Récollets of Brittany were able to overcome the history of the other province of their order in the colony and firmly ensconce themselves in the roles of *cure*s and garrison chaplains.

The problems which arose during Félix Pain's time as chaplain in Fort Louis were foremost in the minds of de Monic and de Costebelle when the Récollets of Brittany were assigned to the colony. De Monic wrote in November of 1701 that the Récollets of Brittany assigned to Plaisance were honest and good monks and that if the preceding friars had been of as high a standard, there

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<sup>496</sup> For further discussion, the reader is referred to Chapter Five, the section entitled "The Chaplain in the Fort".

would have been fewer problems.<sup>497</sup> The past conflicts and problems firmly entrenched in their recent memories, the secular authorities were preparing to deal with an onslaught of similar problems when the Récollets of Brittany arrived. The trepidation regarding the fort post was not entirely one-sided, with the crown recognising that the Récollets had had certain justifiable quarrels with their charges as well.<sup>498</sup> Averting a similar scenario was of great importance to all concerned, although no useful suggestions had been made as to how such an end was to be achieved.

It was apparently assumed that the Récollet assigned to the garrison would reside there as had his predecessors, until the Superior and the Bishop became wise to the problems inherent in this plan. In a move that may have done much to avert further scandal of the Félix Pain variety, a proposal was submitted that the garrison chaplain be permitted to live and eat with his brothers in the convent. In 1702, the Ministry wrote to the Bishop of Quebec stating that he would propose to the governor of Plaisance that the fort chaplain be allowed to eat with his fellow friars.<sup>499</sup> This letter was in response to a dialogue between the Bishop, the Provincial of the Récollets of Brittany, and the Récollets in Plaisance,

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<sup>497</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 154. A Plaisance. M Monic, 27 novembre 1701. See Appendix B.7.

<sup>498</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 130. Au Sr de Monic, c. 1701. See Appendix B.2.

<sup>499</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23, 9. M. l'Evesque de Quebec, A Versailles, le 15 fevrier 1702. See Appendix B.10.

in which it was proposed that the Plaisance Franciscans might find it more congenial and more suitable to take their rest and meals in each other's company rather than in the fort proper. In March of 1702, the ministry wrote to Governor de Monic stating the case quite clearly,

Ce Provincial m'a fait dire qu'il desireroit que le Religieux qui sert d'aumosnier dans ce Fort pust aller prendre ses repas et coucher dans l'auspice qui est estably a Plaisance; cela conviendrait beaucoup mieux son caractere que d'estre tout le long du jour parmy des soldats; ainsy Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> desire que vous luy permettiez, bien entendu qu'il restera dans le Fort quand il y aura des officiers ou des soldats dangereusement malades pour pouvoir assister et leur administrer les Sacremens.<sup>500</sup>

Instructions written to M. de Subercase, newly-made governor of Newfoundland, stated that allowing the Récollet of the fort to live within the convent was aimed at preventing further abuses of the positions, as such problems had been noted in the past.<sup>501</sup> Apparently this remedy to the problems caused by past fort chaplains was not received by all with equanimity, as this same letter reports that several of the officers felt that such an arrangement was

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<sup>500</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23, 149. Le Ministre a M. de Monic, A Versailles, le 22 Mars 1702. Appendix B.12.

<sup>501</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-3, 21-24. Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terrebonne et du Fort Louis de Plaisance. See Appendix B.1.

not practical.<sup>502</sup> Such an argument was actually quite well-founded, as the Fort Louis was on the other side of the harbour mouth from the Récollet convent and church. It was not quite so far up the hill as previous fortifications had been, making it somewhat easier to reach than either the Old Fort or Fort Royal.<sup>503</sup>

The principal concern voiced by many, however, was that the garrison chaplain would not be able to adequately tend to the sick or dying if he lived elsewhere. As this was one of the primary reasons for the maintenance of a fort chaplain, such a contention was reasonable. The political and military climate of the colony had changed somewhat from the earlier years, but even though the community was more firmly ensconced, there were still English raids and skirmishes in which chaplains were constantly needed.<sup>504</sup> The need for the fort chaplain to be constantly on hand to tend to the sick or dying was reduced somewhat, both by the increased accessibility of the chaplain to the fort from the convent and by the slight increase in stability of the colony. Further, if the chaplain lived with his fellow friars and took meals with them, the garrison was

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<sup>502</sup> "...quelques officiers de la places ont pretendu que cela n'estoit pas praticable a cause de la difficulté d'aller et de venir." AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-3, 122. Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terrebonne et du Fort Louis de Plaisance. See Appendix B.1.

<sup>503</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-3, 122. Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terrebonne et du Fort Louis de Plaisance. See Appendix B.1.

<sup>504</sup> John G. Reid, "1686-1720: Imperial Intrusions," in Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid, eds., *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994) 78-79.

spared the cost of his meals, bedclothes, and any other supplies he might need. During the 1700s, such a consideration was indeed important, as the hostilities of the English often took the form of attacks on supply ships and sieges against the French capital of Newfoundland.<sup>505</sup>

It was therefore deemed reasonable that, given the factors involved, the fort chaplain would be on-call and would live in the convent unless his services were required for a period within the fort. Most letters advocating that the chaplain be allowed to live in the hospice also stated that he might do so insofar as it did not interfere with his appointed duties.<sup>506</sup> This feature was quite clearly spelled out, as the Crown was not about to have a chaplain collect his money for services never rendered. If a soldier was sick, dying, or in need of spiritual solace, the chaplain's place was in the fort.<sup>507</sup>

The reasons such a change was allowed only four years after it had been hotly contended are quite clear. The most weighty of the justifications was of preventing further scandal on the part of the man assigned to the fort

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<sup>505</sup> Reid, "Imperial Intrusions," 92.

<sup>506</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 167-167v. Le Ministre a M. de Monic, A Versailles, le 22 Mars 1702. Appendix B.12.

<sup>507</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-3, 21-24. Memoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de Terreneuve et du Fort Louis de Plaisance. See Appendix B.1.

chaplaincy.<sup>508</sup> The change in governors, from de Monic to Subercase, was very likely also a factor and may have been accompanied by a shift in attitude on the part of the crown or Récollets. Further, the difficulty in finding willing persons to occupy the Plaisance posts very likely rendered the crown and authorities more willing to accommodate the demands of the new group of friars. Whatever the case, the Récollets of Brittany were able to keep their community relatively intact, with the fort chaplain permitted to take his meals with and sleep under the same roof as his colleagues.

#### 6.10 Missionary Activities (1701-1702)

The name of the Récollet or Récollets assigned to the fort during the residency debate was not recorded. Initially, three Récollets from Brittany were sent to the Plaisance parish to serve as fort chaplain and *cures*.<sup>509</sup> Charles Mauduit, the Superior of the mission, and Antonin Baudron, destined to serve St. Pierre and Miquelon for at least part of his ministry, were accompanied by another Récollet whose name appears not to be mentioned in the documentary record. Relatively little is known about the lives of the individuals from the Province of Brittany by comparison with the information available regarding the

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<sup>508</sup> De Monic recorded that he and Félix Pain had engaged in such heated disputes that the governor had been obliged to eject Pain from de Monic's house. AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, p. 187. Monic au Ministre, Plaisance, le 27 novembre 1701. See Appendix B.7.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*

Récollets of Saint-Denis. Apart from the focus of past scholars on the Récollets of Saint-Denys, the lack of information regarding those of Brittany is largely due to the scant length of time during which many of the individuals served in Plaisance and Ile Royale. Many of the Récollets of Saint-Denys moved throughout New France, leaving a varied and rich record in the parish registries and provincial records, while the missionary endeavours of the Récollets of Brittany in New France were limited. The result is that apart from the missions to Plaisance and Ile Royale, there are no sources related to New France from which to glean information regarding their activities and lives. The records which would be the most informative are the chapter and conventual records, as well as the parish records which the Récollets of Plaisance would have kept, but the former of these these are fragmented and scant in their scope and detail, while the latter no longer exist.

The first Breton Superior in Plaisance, Charles Mauduit, was a reader or lecturer in theology prior to his becoming Superior in Plaisance. He was named Superior by the Cuburien Chapter of the Récollets of Brittany on July 23, 1701.<sup>510</sup> His time as Superior was not long, as the *Tables Capitulaires* recorded that by 16 September 1703 he was elected Superior of the convent of

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<sup>510</sup> Lemay, "Table nominale," 100, and Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires*, 109-110.



Landerneau in Brittany.<sup>511</sup> The records mentioned that he held the position of theological lecturer or reader at Cuburien in both 1706 and 1711, although the precise periods during which this position was enjoyed are not given.

His actions during his tenure as superior of the Plaisance mission were probably largely focussed on the problem of finances that faced the group. Throughout 1701 and 1702, the Récollets in Newfoundland were engaged in a process by which they hoped to gain control of the funds assigned to them by the crown. While the funds were indeed granted by the ministry, they had been sent to the provincial head of the Récollets of Brittany in France, leaving the Breton friars in Newfoundland without funds sufficient to meet their living expenses.

Antonin Baudron's record is even less detailed in terms of dates, as he held no notable rank within either the Plaisance hospice or any other convent and as such does not appear in the *Tables Capitulaires*. This is not uncommon, as the majority of Récollets likely fell into this category. It is reasonable to presume, as do Bacon and Jouve, that Baudron was among the three Récollets of Brittany sent to Plaisance in 1701 simply by virtue of his recorded presence in the parish in that same year.<sup>512</sup> He served the people of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon for at least a portion of his sojourn, which may have been part of the reason why he escapes mention in much of the documentation of Plaisance. His isolation

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<sup>511</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>512</sup> René Bacon, "Père Antonin Baudron," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 30.

from the rest of the parish would have prevented the recording of details regarding his character, actions, and problems in much the same way as it evidentially did that of Patrice René.

What little is known of him comes from a surviving letter written by Baudron to the crown, in which he requested an additional two to three hundred *livres per annum*. He also complained of the faithlessness of the inhabitants to whom he ministered, saying that they did not observe the feast and holy days. There was also the problem of alcoholic beverages being served and consumed during services, of which Père Antonin complained bitterly.<sup>513</sup> Whether he received satisfaction and assistance from the crown is not recorded, but the plight of the single friar in St. Pierre was certainly unenviable. Living in isolation from his fellow Franciscans placed him in the difficult position of having little recourse to the strength and influence of numbers and also meant that he was not even able to take his meals and make his observances with other members of his order. Chances are quite good that other Récollets, both of Saint-Denis and Brittany, found at St. Pierre an equally inhospitable populace, although no others wrote of their problems. A goodly measure of Baudron's problem was likely that

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<sup>513</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-213v. Père Antonin au Ministre, Îles St. Pierre, le 25 septembre 1701. Appendix B.3.

he was largely dealing with transitory fishermen, who used St. Pierre as a base from which to conduct their trade.<sup>514</sup>

During the first two years of the Breton mission, there were other faceless and nameless friars who participated in the religious life of both colony and convent, although no records appear to remain of their actions or lives. The immediate reaction of the colony to the new Récollets appears to have been largely positive, although the complaints of Antonin regarding the conduct of the inhabitants of St. Pierre casts a certain degree of realism over the picture. The conduct of the inhabitants probably fell on the moderate to poor side of the spectrum, but, overall, they seemed willing to financially support the Récollets and to show at least some semblance of proper behaviour. While initially, the crown appears to have been worried about the reception that these new friars would get from the populace,<sup>515</sup> the fears appear to have been unfounded.<sup>516</sup> Rather than concentrating on winning people over to a toleration of the Récollets,

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<sup>514</sup> De la Morandière, *Histoire de la pêche française*, 436.

<sup>515</sup> In letters predating the arrival of the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance, the Ministry and crown exhorted the governor to make certain that the populace treated the Récollets properly and accorded them their due respect. AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, p. 129. Ministre au Sr. de Monic, s.n.; AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, p.149. Ministre au Sr. de Monic, A Versailles, le 13 avril, 1701.

<sup>516</sup> “Je vois avec beaucoup de satisfaction que vous soyez content des Religieux Recolets que le provincial de la province de Bretagne a envoyé en Terre neuve...” AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 149v. Ministre au Sr. de Monic, A Versailles, le 22 mars, 1702.

the crown was able to praise their reception and treatment of the friars and to exhort the inhabitants to continue in their efforts at supporting the *curés*.<sup>517</sup>

Precisely how much the letters of royal officials can be relied upon to depict the true feelings of the general populace is unascertainable. If the documents are at all reliable as indicators of public opinion, the Récollets were accepted by the French colonists in Newfoundland. Those of Brittany certainly appear to have had less difficulty upon arrival with the secular authorities of Plaisance. The lack of difficulty in obtaining donations seems to indicate a general acceptance, although the donation of money to the church was such an integral feature of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Church that such gifts may have been more a matter of form than an indicator of sentiments. Further, the money provided the Récollets of Brittany by the crown may have reduced the pressure the friars were obliged to place upon the populace for support.

#### 6.11 The Missionary Activities (1703-1714)

There appears to have been a steady number of Récollets in Plaisance after the assumption of the religious mantle of Newfoundland by the Franciscan Province of Brittany. Following Charles Mauduit, who assumed the office in

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<sup>517</sup> "...excitez les marchands et habitans a leur continuer les charitez qu'ils ont coutume de leur faire, afin qu'ils puissent subsister." AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 448-449. A M. de Monic. A Versailles, le 22e Mars 1702. See Appendix B.12.

1701, Hilarion Huguen was continued in the position of Superior of the Plaisance hospice in 1703.<sup>518</sup> Presumably from this description Huguen was appointed in 1702 and was the successor to Mauduit. Mauduit appeared as lecturer in theology and *Gardien* of Landernau, Brittany, in 1703, so presumably he abandoned Plaisance when replaced by Huguen.<sup>519</sup> Huguen acted as Superior of the hospice for a year or two, whence he was replaced by Raymond du Val, who is listed as continuing in that position in 1706.<sup>520</sup> This phrasing implies that he was named to or assumed the position in 1705 or 1704, neither of which years are recorded in the *Tables Capitulaires*. It appears that there was a regular replacement of the superiors of the mission during the first few years, with many of them going on to assume positions in convents or other hospices thereafter. Charles Mauduit became a lecturer in theology in 1706 at Curburien, Huguen appears to have made his way to Green Island in 1708, and du Val was later found at Evenopolensi.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>518</sup> "In hospitio Placentino, V. P. Hylarion Huguen superior continuatur." Courtecuisse, *Tables Capitulaires*, 113.

<sup>519</sup> "In conventu Landerniae, V. P. Carolus Mauduit, sacrae theologiae lector, guardianus instituitur." *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>520</sup> "In hospitio Placentino, V. p. Remondus du Val superior continuatur." *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.*, 115, 117, 121.

Du Val actually appeared twice in the list of Superiors of the Plaisance hospice, with the second mention being in 1708.<sup>522</sup> He is listed as continuing in the position of superior of the hospice, the same statement as had been made regarding his position in 1706. There is no record for 1707, so it is not possible to state concretely that du Val remained in Plaisance for the two year interim. It is, however, likely that he was maintained in the colony as the superior of the mission, especially given the length of journeys to and from France and the risks involved in such travel during the War of the Spanish Succession. Du Val remained as superior until 1710, whereupon he was replaced by Gratien Raoul, a friar whose story pertains more to the move to Ile Royale than to the sedentary period of Plaisance.<sup>523</sup>

Du Val's fate after his departure from Plaisance has been debated by some historians. After his sojourn in Plaisance, he moved back to France where, in 1711, he was the *gardien* of Evenopolensi and in 1718 he served as master of novices at Insulae Viridis. According to René Bacon, Odoric Jouve's researches located Du Val in Plaisance again in 1716.<sup>524</sup> This claim appears unlikely, given the fact that the French left Plaisance in 1714. If a remnant of French Catholics were found in Plaisance in 1716, it is conceivable that Du Val was among them,

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<sup>522</sup> "In hospitio Placentino, V. P. Raimondus du Val superior continuatur." *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>524</sup> René Bacon, "Père Raymond Duval," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 413.

although it is highly unlikely. The Plaisance hospice was not maintained after the abandonment of the colony and the church used by the community and friars was turned over to the English.

During the period of 1702-1714, only one other named Récollet from Brittany appeared in the records as having served in Plaisance. Père Fleurend, fort chaplain in Plaisance in 1707 and member of the province of Brittany, was involved as advisor in the case of an officer who had committed a sexual indiscretion with the daughter of an inhabitant.<sup>525</sup> The officer in question was St.-Ovide de Brouillan, nephew of the Mombeton de Brouillan, once governor of Plaisance. From reports of the incident, it appears that St.-Ovide, as he was commonly called, engaged in a sexual relationship with a local girl. While the girl claimed that he had promised marriage, St.-Ovide denied it. The outcome was that Père Fleurend and Père Hyacinthe Bernard, a Dominican chaplain from the ship la Loire, recommended that a 2000 livre settlement be paid the girl's family, who St.-Ovide claimed agreed to the settlement.<sup>526</sup> Fleurend did not appear by name in other documentation, although it is quite probable that any other references to the fort chaplain in 1707 apply to this friar.

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<sup>525</sup> Series B, vol. 29-2, 441-442. A M. de Costebelle. A Versailles, le 10 aout 1707. See Appendix B.22.

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*

Apart from Baudron and Fleurend's cases, the names of Récollets in Plaisance who were not superiors of the mission appear to be quite sparse in the documentary record. There are certainly mentions of Récollets travelling to the colony, and there is even a record of one having died in St. Pierre.<sup>527</sup>

#### 6.11.1 The Hospital.

While the Récollets of Saint-Denis had left Plaisance in the capable hands of the Récollets of Brittany in 1701, involvement between the colony and these friars did not end at that time. Only a little information exists, however, regarding the hospital in Plaisance and the roles played by Récollets of Saint-Denis therein.<sup>528</sup> Commenced in 1696, the hospital appears to have been maintained from that time throughout the duration of the Plaisance settlement.<sup>529</sup> In 1707, de Costebelle records that he has had difficulties in finding someone to maintain the gardens, lodgings and material goods of the

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<sup>527</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-213v. Extrait des Lettres de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terre-Neuve. Le Père Antonin Relig<sup>x</sup> Recolé aux Iles St. Pierre le 25 7<sup>bre</sup> [1701]. See Appendix B.3.

<sup>528</sup> The hospital in Plaisance ought not to be confused with the Récollet hospice in the community. The hospital was a medical facility while the hospice was the religious establishment of the friars. A strong connection between the spiritual and the physical necessitated communication between both institutions, but the Récollet hospice appears to have been separate from the hospital.

<sup>529</sup> An early mention of the hospital appears in a 1696 document AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 120, 40v. Demandes pour les Ecclesiastiques. 1696. Terre-Neuve.



hospital and has appealed to the Superior of the Récollets of Quebec to assist him by providing a friar for the purposes specified. De Costebelle requested a brother by the name of Auchapeau, whom he had previously known in some unspecified fashion.<sup>530</sup> It is possible that Auchapeau served in Plaisance during some previous period, hence de Costebelle's familiarity with his services, but no further information survives about this friar.

De Costebelle's faith in his request appears to have been well-founded.

The French Ministry wrote the following year that

... Le Superieur des Recolets de Quebec vous a envoyé le frere que vous luy avez demandé pour avoir soin des jardins et du logement de cet hospital et menager les consommations avec oeconomie.<sup>531</sup>

The Superior furnished de Costebelle with a friar, presumably Auchapeau, to serve the needs of the hospital as caretaker and gardener. This is the last mention of Auchapeau and there is no account of his having accompanied the colony to Ile Royale some seven years later. In fact, there is little mention of his life in any sources, leading one to believe that he was a fairly low-ranking and low-profile friar. He may have served in Plaisance during the mission of the Récollets of Saint-Denis, but confirming such a claim has proven difficult as the

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<sup>530</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 5, p. 171. De Costebelle au Ministre, A Plaisance, ce 10 novembre 1707. See Appendix B.23.

<sup>531</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 29-5, 145. Ministre à de Costebelle, A Versailles le 6 juin 1708. See Appendix B.26.

records reveal nothing regarding his life. What is clear is that de Costebelle requested him for service in the hospital in Plaisance rather than submitting a claim to the Récollets of Brittany. Given de Costebelle's past antagonism with certain members of the province of Saint-Denis, Auchapeau must have had some remarkable personal characteristics which appealed to the governor sufficiently to request his services.

#### 6.12 Religious Life and Practices

Although not marked with the well-documented conflicts that hounded the service of the Récollets of Saint-Denis, the years in which the Récollets of Brittany ministered to Plaisance and the surrounding communities were not idyllic. During the 1700s, Plaisance suffered through a series of attacks and sieges during the course of France's war with England, in which one of the chief problems was constant threat of starvation and depletion of essential supplies. The Récollets, as one cog of the machine which was Plaisance, were affected by the conditions to which the colony was subjected and were also responsible for leading the people spiritually in times of unrest, although specific details of their leadership are generally lacking. One of the side effects of the War of the Spanish Succession was a marked increase in the number of French naval vessels which prowled the waters off the coast of Newfoundland and often pulled into port at Plaisance, ships which routinely carried with them a chaplain of much the same variety as punctuated Plaisance's early religious life. These men, while not always

nasty, brutish and short, were certainly unsavoury characters at times and provided an unstable and transitory element in the colony's spiritual milieu.

The concern on the part of the Crown for the religious well-being of those about to die for their country led to an increased emphasis on maintaining chaplains on all naval vessels. The Récollets of various provinces, with a special emphasis on that of Saint-Denis, provided many of these chaplains, although many others came from other religious orders such as the Jesuits or Lazarists.<sup>532</sup> These men accompanied their assigned ships wherever service took them, often resulting in trips across the Atlantic to support the defence of New France from English incursions. Time on board a ship did not make one a gentleman and trans-Atlantic travel was difficult at the best of times; while being shot at by another ship with larger cannons it was quite uncomfortable. The result was that the self-same sort of chaplains who formed the nucleus around which the earliest religious life in Plaisance was formed returned to haunt the established church leaders with their inequitable ways.

There were several complaints about the conduct of the naval chaplains who debarked in Plaisance. Often referred to as "scandalous priests" in colonial correspondence, the chaplains appeared not to respect the ecclesiastics already present in the colony. A hint of a problem is found in a letter from the ministry to Subercase in 1704, in which it is stated that the Superior of Plaisance had been

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<sup>532</sup> Varachaud, "La formation," 67. McManners, *The Clerical Establishment*, 64.

granted the powers and privileges of Vicar-General (*Grand Vicar*). This position gave the Superior religious jurisdiction over the parish and included control over the parish priests and any other low-ranking clerics who set foot in the colony.<sup>533</sup> The crown intended that chaplains voyaging to Plaisance respect the Vicar-General's judgements and character and to obey his directives in conducting their ministries.<sup>534</sup>

There is an implication, however slight, that such respect had been an issue and that the powers of vicar-generals were designed to counteract this quandary. This theory is borne out by further discussion in later years of the problems with which the Superior was faced and the general reaction of chaplains to his ordinances. In 1706, the ministry exchanged correspondence with Subercase regarding a scandalous priest who had been causing problems within the colony. No details regarding the transgressions of the iniquitous one are listed, but his case was severe enough to warrant a consultation with the

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<sup>533</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 31. It may be recalled that Joseph Denis held this position in 1689 and Patrice René included it in his title in 1698. Hilarion Huguen appears to have been Superior of the Plaisance mission in 1703, although it is possible that the title was granted in 1692 and not made evident in the colonial records until the following year. In that case, Charles Mauduit would have been given the title. The title and privileges of Vicar-General seem to have been awarded to the Superior of the hospice rather than to any individual, making it possible to transfer the authority with a change in Superiors. In so isolated a region as Plaisance, continuity of religious authority in the form of a Vicar-General was necessary as regular visits from the Bishop of Quebec were nigh on impossible.

<sup>534</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 25, 67. A M. de Subercaze. A Versailles, le 2 avril 1704. See Appendix B. 14.

ministry in France, the Vicar-General in Plaisance and de Costebelle.<sup>535</sup> The priest in question was probably a ship's chaplain, as the positions of parish priests or *cures* were filled by Récollets of Brittany. The odds are that if the problem had been with one of the Récollets, mention would have been made of that fact and the Superior would have been called upon to discipline the fellow. A priest fell outside of the Superior's jurisdiction, however, and the situation necessitated the Vicar-General's authority, even if the individual holding the position was one in the same. It is possible that the reprobate with a surplice was a member of the Franciscan or another order, but there is no mention of any sort of affiliation and every indication that he was not one of the Récollets of Plaisance.

#### 6.13 Transitions: Religious Factors in the Move to Ile Royale

In 1713, Gratien Raoul, already a busy man, became a frantic one. Superior of the hospice in Plaisance, he was to be an integral part of the move from Newfoundland to Ile Royale in the very near future. In 1710, he had been named Superior of the Plaisance mission, an appointment which was renewed in 1711 at the chapter in Pontivy. This erstwhile professor of theology held the foremost religious authority in Plaisance and the rest of French Newfoundland,

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<sup>535</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 27-4, 701. A Mr. de Subercaze. A Versailles, le 22 may 1706. See Appendix B.18.

as he was Vicar General of the Bishop of Quebec. Responsibility fell to him, therefore, to assure the spiritual health of the colony up to and during the move. In this charge, he was to have help, as Récollets Jean-Capistran Chevrau and Dominique de la Marche were also engaged to help ease the transition. Chevrau and de la Marche were not of his province, but in extremis, this did not matter as much as it would in later years. The task to which the Récollets had been put was to adapt the religious life of Plaisance to both the move and a new location.<sup>536</sup> While full-scale description of the move, its military, financial and economic implications as well as the religious impact of such an endeavour are certainly beyond the scope of this thesis, some discussion of the function of religion in the process of the move is not only relevant, but sheds further light on both life before and after this major transition in the colony's life.

Initially, there was some confusion as to how religious aspects of the move would be handled. The Crown recognised the need for religious involvement, but experienced problems finding sufficient chaplains to tend to the needs of both the soldiers, who left first to secure the site of the new settlement, and the inhabitants who were to follow the next year but needed *cures* in the interim.<sup>537</sup> The dilemma was thus to find sufficient clergy for the two half-settlements, one

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<sup>536</sup> For a detailed discussion of the religious life of the new colony of Louisbourg and the roles played by the Récollets of both provinces, the colonists, secular authorities and other religieux in that community, see Johnston, *Religion in Life*.

<sup>537</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-1, 228-229. Le Sr. de St. Ovide. A Versailles le 10 avril 1713. See Appendix B.34.

of which was primarily military, on Ile Royale, and the other residential and economic, in Plaisance. In the winter of 1713, chaplains were sure to be needed in both locales. There were properties to sell, people to bury, records to transfer, births, possibly marriages, and, in general, stress to soothe.

An appeal was made from France to the Récollets of Quebec requesting that one Récollet of their number be sent to Ile Royale to spent the winter there with another missionary from either Acadia or Plaisance. St.-Ovide was to accompany the troops to Ile Royale and was under strict orders to ensure that his and the actions of his men were such that they would bring divine blessings upon the enterprise.<sup>538</sup>

At the same time as a letter was making its way to the Superior in Canada, many other epistles were being scattered throughout the colony in preparation for the move, among them one to St. Ovide, in which the Minister of the Marine stated that an appeal had been made to de Costebelle for a Récollet from Plaisance to accompany the inhabitants and soldiers during the relocation. It was hoped that another would accompany the troops to be sent from Quebec to assist in the move. Still others could be found in Acadia if needs pressed beyond the accommodations made.<sup>539</sup> The idea of acquiring a Récollet from Plaisance was

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<sup>538</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-2, 191-192. Au Superior des Récollets en Canada. A Versailles le 8 avril 1713. See Appendix B.33.

<sup>539</sup> AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-1, 228-229. Le Sr. de St. Ovide. A Versailles le 10 avril 1713. See Appendix B.34.

quickly abandoned as the French ministry recognised that there was a possibility that Plaisance would be left without chaplains sufficient to serve its religious needs during the winter.<sup>540</sup> The troops arrived from Quebec bringing with them two Récollet fathers and a lay brother, possibly Pascal Martel, from the Quebec convent of the Province of Saint-Denis.<sup>541</sup> These friars were to assist in the move to Ile Royale and to oversee the establishment of a new convent and religious network in that settlement, with Dominique de la Marche as the Superior.<sup>542</sup>

The first 250 people left Plaisance in July of 1713 intending to explore the various inhabitable areas of Cape Breton and to find a location that would facilitate the establishment of a sedentary fishery and prosperous settlement.<sup>543</sup> The Récollets from Quebec accompanied this group in its inspection of the various possible harbours in which settlement might be undertaken, finally

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<sup>540</sup> Odoric Jouve, "Père Jean-Capistran Chevrau," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 113.

<sup>541</sup> René Bacon, "Père Dominique de la Marche," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 228; Odoric Jouve, "Père Jean-Capistran Chevrau," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 113.

<sup>542</sup> René Bacon, "Père Dominique de la Marche," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 228.

<sup>543</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 11.



settling on H vre- -l'Anglais which was promptly renamed Port-Louis and later became known as Louisbourg.<sup>544</sup>

For Jean-Capistran Chevr , travelling to Plaisance must have evoked many memories, as he was a native of the colony, having been sent away to become a R collet.<sup>545</sup> He was assigned to serve the troops while de la Marche was preoccupied with the establishment of religious observance in the rest of the community. After the initial establishment, these two men, along with others of their Franciscan province, remained in the service of the portion of the Louisbourg population which was not from Plaisance, as the Acadians had been used to the R collets of Saint-Denis.<sup>546</sup>

The remainder of the Plaisance settlement moved to Ile Royale at the end of the summer of 1714, having been permitted by the English queen to finish the fishing season and to sell their properties to newly-arrived English settlers. The state of the properties on the beach at Plaisance is recorded on a British

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<sup>544</sup> Lemay, "Les R collets de la Province de Saint-Denis et ceux de la Province de Bretagne," 77- 78; Odoric Jouve, "P re Jean-Capistran Chevr ," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 113.

<sup>545</sup> For a further discussion of the life of Jean Capistran Chevr  and his possible genealogical connections within Plaisance, see Appendix E and Odoric Jouve, "P re Jean-Capistran Chevr ," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 111-117.

<sup>546</sup> Ren  Bacon, "P re Dominique de la Marche," in *Dictionnaire biographique*, 229.

Ordinance map of 1714, with the church, convent and garden being clearly located on the same spot as they had been since 1694.<sup>547</sup>

The attention paid to the religious aspects of the move are particularly revealing in that the two provinces of Récollets associated with Plaisance were incorporated. Récollets from both the Province of Brittany and Quebec were used during 1713 and 1714 to make up the numbers needed to assure a strong religious presence in both the new settlement and the old. The focus appears to have been on providing adequate religious supervision and service in an effort to persuade the entire community to move as a unit to Ile Royale, as well as to ensure as much stability and comfort as possible among the soldiers and colonists during the resettlement.

There was another factor at work during this period, a factor which primarily influenced life in the new settlement of Louisbourg, but which may have been felt throughout the time in which the Récollets of Brittany served Plaisance and during the move to Ile Royale. Bishop Saint-Vallier, still Bishop of Quebec, had been in France for thirteen years when the portion of the Treaty of Utrecht pertaining to Newfoundland was enacted. He returned in the same summer as the first wave was sent from Plaisance to Cape Breton, and his voice in the management of the colony was more keenly felt from that point onwards.

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<sup>547</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 8. For further discussion of the progression of the church locations, refer to chapters four, five and six in this thesis with particular attention to the sections on the church structures and Récollet property.

Saint-Vallier did not like the Récollets of Brittany and felt them to be coarse, ineffective and unrefined. His feelings were that these friars were unsuitable to the task of providing religious examples to the colonists and compared unfavourably to the Récollets of Saint-Denis.<sup>548</sup> He was well-pleased that the Récollets of Paris were included in the move and intended that they should ultimately replace the friars of Brittany after the new community had eased into normal life.<sup>549</sup>

During the actual move, there does not appear to have been any considerable strife between the two provinces of Récollets, with both contributing as necessary to the endeavour. This was quite possibly abetted by the fact that, until the transition was complete, they were not placed into constant contact with each other for any period of time nor was there any power struggle until after the community resettled.

### 6.13 Conclusions

The first two years of the mission of the Récollets of Brittany in Plaisance proved to be relatively peaceful by comparison with those of the Récollets of Saint-Denis. Popular opinion does not appear to have condemned the Breton friars for the abandonment of French Newfoundland by their Parisian *contrères*.

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<sup>548</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 25, 40.

<sup>549</sup> Johnston, *Religion in Life*, 25.

All in all, the most significant event during the course of their establishment was the problem they had in obtaining the money due to them by the crown, but this was successfully resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned. The Récollets of Brittany began their mission on a rather different tack than did those of Saint-Denys, immediately insisting on regular and fixed financial support from the crown as well as the subsidy traditionally paid to the *curés* by the inhabitants of Plaisance. This feature, combined with the increased stability of the colony and the general attitudes of the secular authorities, meant that the Récollets of Brittany blended smoothly into the mechanics of the colony. The common social and cultural backgrounds of Récollets and colonists inevitably made the transition easier, as linguistic barriers and cultural expectations were surmounted.

The secular authorities did not appear to have any serious quarrels with their new *religieux*, treating them reasonably respectfully and assisting them in obtaining their money. The primary difficulty facing the Bretons was controlling the influx of chaplains travelling aboard naval vessels and reputedly setting bad examples and disobeying the Superior of the Récollets. The rank accorded to the Breton Superior or Vicar-General was designed to give him ultimate spiritual authority over the colony's religious practitioners, but does not appear to have been easily enforceable.

The final chapter of the Récollet presence in Plaisance ended in defeat, but actually signalled the beginning of a new colony and religious milieu, as the

result was Louisbourg being settled and eventually growing into a thriving, bustling community in which religious life played a central social, economic and political role in much the same way as it had in Plaisance. The religious life of Plaisance had stabilised under the Récollets of Brittany and a bond had formed between the Breton friars and the Plaisance inhabitants, which endured both the move and later conflicts of religious jurisdiction in Louisbourg.

## Chapter Seven Conclusions

Within Plaisance, the established Church held a pivotal role as it both reflected and influenced the development of the colony. French Newfoundland was widely scattered, with people in an array of outlying areas linked together by spokes which met at the hub of Plaisance, the most densely and highly populated area of the French domain and the political and economic centre. Within the varied conglomeration of cultures, backgrounds and economic roles there were a few tendrils which bound the French together, the cultural symbol of the Gallican Church being among the foremost. While not all of the inhabitants in Plaisance were French or Roman Catholic, the church, both in its physical and social structure united the *mélange* into a community. It provided a modicum of social support against often adversarial and tyrannical secular authorities, gave counsel and kept peace, assisted in providing medical care, and kept the community together in the face of all too frequent trials and tribulations.

Cornelius Jaenen, in his remarkably detailed and inclusive history of the role of the Church in colonial New France, outlined a two-part model through which the progression of the history of official religious establishment could be understood. Summarised briefly, Jaenen's framework divided the church in New France into the missionary and colonial churches, each of which bore distinctive characteristics and was related to the other form in some fashion. Typically, the earliest churches in New France belonged to the missionary sort and were

principally occupied with conversion and preaching Christianity to the indigenous peoples of Canada and Acadia as well as ensuring some basic standards of morality within the earliest, and often informal, European settlements. The colonial church was a more established social structure and, while maintaining an interest in converting any previously unnoticed “infidels” who happened to stray within its realm, was preoccupied with maintaining a religious life within an established community in much the same way as would have been purposed in a European French municipality.<sup>550</sup>

The course of Plaisance’s religious history can be seen through this model which serves to delineate the reasons for which the colony’s religious milieu took the forms it did, the functions played by the various religious characters in Plaisance, and the way in which the community’s spiritual structure changed throughout the course of its existence. Between the official establishment in 1660 and the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, Plaisance progressed from a small, largely transitory population in which many of the residents were summer fishermen to a larger, more stable community with a nucleus of key families around whom the settlement revolved. The religious life of the colony reflected this, shifting with currents in the social, political and economic tides.

The earliest years of settlement see a missionary church structure, if indeed it could be called a structure, in place in Plaisance, with little in the way

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<sup>550</sup> Jaenen, *Role of the Church*, viii.

of religious continuity or stability. The priests travelling to Plaisance were not generally concerned with converting natives, but rather with providing fishermen with basic religious services. As in the case of de Neuville, some came back repeatedly to Newfoundland during the course of their labours, but did not winter in the colony during its formative years. The gruesome events surrounding the du Ferrons accentuated the colony's vulnerability and isolation and very likely deterred many from wishing to assume a permanent role in its functions. Further, those almoners who did travel to Plaisance with the fishing fleets were there primarily for the good of the sailors and often did not have time to minister to the needs of the resident population of Plaisance.<sup>551</sup> The first portion of Plaisance's life was thus marked by the most primitive form of a missionary church, in which religious services depended on the whims of the chaplains serving the fishermen and in which the colonists were under little scrutiny by the Church.

The state, in the form of the secular authorities of Plaisance, recognised the problems caused by such inattention to religious detail and petitioned for a resident chaplain.<sup>552</sup> Such a request became a refrain within the colony, as Plaisance's religious life was marked by a difficulty in finding willing religious for the service of either fort or town. The result of religious neglect was a general

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<sup>551</sup> AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 68. See Appendix A.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*



problem in maintaining religious control of the colony. The Huguenot presence in New France was quite significant and Plaisance was no exception to this phenomenon. Coupled with the problem of finding suitable chaplains for the colony was the influence of the Protestant faction within the town. Governor Parat was chiefly responsible for dealing with the problems of the “schismatics”, as they were called and often found himself ill-equipped to do so. While he did manage to convert most of the Protestants to the Roman Catholic Church, his attempts to regulate the religious life of the colony were largely unfruitful. He remarked that those whom he had converted to Roman Catholicism, often demonstrated a lack of any religious inclinations rather than the hoped-for pious Catholicism.<sup>553</sup> The missionaries sent to Plaisance in its first three decades were most often secular clergy, such as Martin d’Hurte or Laurent Morin and were of variable quality. Control of these men ultimately lay in the hands of the Missions Etrangères and the French Ministry of the Marine, neither of whom were able to comprehend or regulate the religious climate of the colony from afar.

This having been said, the residents of and visitors to Plaisance were not all devoid of religious inclinations, nor were all questionable Catholics. There was a church in early Plaisance as well as a chapel within the Old Fort.<sup>554</sup> The ceremonial procession linking the fishery and the Church probably originated in

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<sup>553</sup> *Documents relatifs*, vol. 1, 381-382. See Appendix A.

<sup>554</sup> See Appendix C, Figure 1.

the first three decades of Plaisance's settlement history as a means through which French fishermen could religiously express the significance of the fishery and its social implications. As most of the settlers and seasonal fishermen originated in France, they brought with them the teachings and practices of the Gallican Church as they had absorbed them. Plaisance was thus no different from many portions of New France in that it was essentially a Roman Catholic colony without consistent Church leadership.

The missionary Church came to a fore in 1689, with the implication of an established religious structure within the colony. Whereas the religious life of Plaisance had, for all practical purposes, been left in the hands of the secular authorities of the colony, it was suddenly whisked under the guidance of the Franciscan Récollets. These friars were nominally given complete control of the spiritual and moral life of the community, a control accentuated by the practical transfer of authority over the colonies of New France to the bishopric of Quebec. The authority and influence of the Récollets grew, as their work in Plaisance fell under the jurisdiction of Quebec, a factor which allowed them greater leverage than they would have had as either individual priests or affiliates of an order based in France. Practically, however, they encountered resistance from the political leader, who had used the lack of Church supervision to his own advantage. In this critical period, religious life in Plaisance made the shift from a malleable religious milieu to a more controlled spiritual climate. Direct

supervision by one branch of the Church began to shape the way in which governors and inhabitants behaved.

The transition in Plaisance from a missionary church to a colonial one was not abrupt, but rather proceeded at a cautious pace, slowed by the unavailability of clergy, the unstable political situation in the area, and the financial difficulties of the early friars. The colony in 1689 was very much under the control of the infamous governor Parat, who demonstrated his unwillingness to co-operate with just about everyone, including the Récollets. It was not until de Brouillan's arrival that the seed planted by Bishop Saint-Vallier began to germinate.

The consolidation of the efforts of church and state were ultimately responsible for the increased economic, political and social stability in Plaisance, as the Récollets were finally given the support needed to provide spiritual guidance to and implement some religious control over the inhabitants. The 1690s were a transitional period in the colony's life, both religiously and politically. This prosperous period entrenched the colony as a viable enterprise and, in so doing, determined the need for ongoing religious leadership.

The work of the Récollets of Saint-Denis in Plaisance, from 1689 through to 1700, was therefore primarily a missionary one, with particular attention having been paid to regaining and retaining authority of the spiritual milieu. During the prosperous and relatively stable early 1690s, the mission became more firmly established. The end of the seventeenth century brought a

recognition of the vulnerability of the Récollets' positions, as both conflict with the garrison commander and a change in governor brought disunity between Church and state.

The development of the settlement and that of the official church proceeded hand in hand, but the church took a little more time to stabilise than did the colony. When Plaisance was coming into its own during the years leading up to the War of the Spanish Succession, the Récollets of Saint-Denis were edging out of the colony. An increased demand for naval chaplains coupled with friction between the Récollets of Saint-Denis in Plaisance and the secular leaders led the friars of the province of Paris to redistribute their services elsewhere. Plaisance was, for all intents and purposes, abandoned by Saint-Denis in 1700, with the withdrawal having been formalized a year later in 1701.

Ironically, the departure of the Récollets of Saint-Denis from Plaisance heralded the beginning of religious security within the colony, as the first group of Franciscans was replaced by the Récollets of Brittany. The Breton friars quickly moved into fill the gap left by Saint-Denis and assured a continuous and stable presence in the colony from the time of their arrival, in the summer of 1701, through to the move to Louisbourg in 1714. Initially a last resort, the assignation of the Récollets of Brittany to the Plaisance mission succeeded in a way neither religious nor secular authorities could have predicted. The Breton friars were able to adapt to the maritime environment and way of life with astonishing ease and communicated effectively with the colonists and seasonal fishermen.

A group regarded with disfavour by Bishop Saint-Vallier for its coarse ways and lowly origins, the Récollets from Brittany in Plaisance steadily provided religious services to a colony which had grown in both population numbers and complexity. The added stability gained by Plaisance enabled it to withstand the barrage of attacks in the early 1700s and to survive the sieges laid by the English in that same period. As the stability of the colony increased, so too did its religious gain both added solidity and importance. When the time came for the colony to move to Ile Royale, the role of religion was among the foremost concerns as the plans were made.

Precisely when, or even if, Plaisance became a colonial rather than a missionary church is difficult to say. The colonial church in New France was concerned principally with reproducing the values, practices and beliefs of the Gallican Church, essentially creating a replica of the French system in the New World. As such, the colonial church concentrated on aspects of domestic life in the colonies and focussed on quotidian observance rather than conversion. Certain features of the religious framework of Plaisance adhere to this model more closely than to the other, especially in the later years of Plaisance which saw a greater number of women and children in the communities. As the resident population of Plaisance grew and changed to include more women, the religious environment changed to incorporate these new conditions.

In a sense, the Church in Plaisance was at once missionary and colonial, as the resident population formed a church body around which a colonial set of

practices and services were built and the migratory portion of the population, which never really disappeared, was more in need of missionary work. This, perhaps, was one of the chief problems with building a church in Plaisance. Appealing to both the resident and migratory aspects of the community's character was difficult and required inordinate flexibility on the part of both government and ecclesiastical organisations.

The wide array of types of religious in Plaisance is a testimony to the variety of inhabitants and visitors, many of whom had particular religious affiliations and tastes. During the course of the colony's existence it was served by secular clergy, Récollets from the Provinces of Saint-Denis and Brittany, Capuchin friars and Dominicans. There may have been other sorts of clergy in the colony, especially given the large number of chaplains, both naval and marine, who passed through Plaisance.

The secular clergy attended the religious needs of the colonists during the years leading up to the arrival of the Récollets in 1689 and continued to assist the fishermen and naval vessels thereafter. One of the chief problems encountered by the Récollets of Brittany during the course of their work in Plaisance was how best to deal with these chaplains such that religious hegemony was maintained by the resident clergy without effecting the alienation of the fishermen and soldiers from the colonial church.

In outlying areas such as St. Pierre, where the official Church presence was often limited to one friar or priest, the resident clerics or friars generally had

a more difficult time in maintaining order. A greater number of migratory fishermen and their chaplains generally meant a lesser degree of control by both secular and religious authorities in the area.

The religious climate was to a great degree controlled by the way in which church and state interacted within its confines. As with the Church in continental France, connections between clerical and secular leaders in Plaisance formed the cultural milieu in which both groups worked. The governors and religious were supposed to work together in the well-oiled machine of French society, creating an environment in which spirituality, economy and policy flourished. Plaisance was a small, isolated community, however, with a minimum of secular leadership and contained few checks and balances that could counter any abuses of power from an individual. If the governor decided to use state-paid labour, officially destined for use on the fort, to build himself a new house, there were few in the colony who could or would stop him. Any fluctuations in power within Plaisance were felt by all, and when the state and church did not agree, it was a significant problem. The problems between the secular authorities and the Récollets of Saint-Denis in the late 1690s, for instance, were at least part of the reason for which those Récollets left the community, leaving a spiritual void in the town. Practically, the religious were necessary to fill basic roles such as providing funerary, marital and baptismal rites, processes without which the inhabitants of Plaisance were unable to grow within the church.

In cases in which the governor and the religious could work together amicably, the community flourished and both the Church and the economy within the colony benefited. De Brouillan's relationship with the Récollets of Saint-Denis was prosperous for both parties, as the Récollets were willing to work in the political arena to assure peace within the colony in situations such as that of the problems surrounding Lahontan, and the governor was prepared to provide them with the land and resources they needed to continue their services. De Costebelle was able to work in a similar fashion with the Récollets of Brittany and relied heavily upon them to ensure the stability of the colony during the years in which Plaisance was often under siege and during the move to Ile Royale.

Despite the conflicts between the governors and the religious of the colony, the religious history of Plaisance was not a prolonged series of battles between Church and state. The tendency towards disagreement between friars and governors showed up significantly in the documentation as problems were typically reported more than were commendations. The times of conflict were therefore often accentuated more than the peaceable times.

The distinctive nature of the French colony in Newfoundland made for a different set of problems with which the friars were forced to deal. While funding for the Church was an issue throughout New France, the lack of a tithe in Plaisance significantly affected the ways in which those respective groups of



Récollets dealt with the colonists.<sup>555</sup> The Récollets of Saint-Denis relied heavily upon the donations from the inhabitants to purchase a property, which they sold soon after. They also required financial support to meet their daily needs. The Récollets of Brittany, by contrast, arranged supplementary funding from the crown with which they could purchase supplies, thereby not requiring as much of the residents' resources as their predecessors. Further, such funding gave them an added measure of stability during periods of economic recession.

Many problems were the same, however, as all religious in both France and New France were battling Protestantism and impiety. The Récollets had to deal with people unwilling to show respect for or attend the Church as well as governors who were intent on setting a poor moral example through their exhibition of inadequate sexual mores. Clergy responsible for the crews of fishing and naval vessels also caused problems as they were unwilling to listen to the resident friars.

The religious life of early Plaisance can perhaps best be typified as erratic, as its mood varied with the individuals leading the community. The later years of the colony saw a more balanced spiritual and political climate as religious life became increasingly colonial and far less missionary. As the community's social, political, military and economic foundations solidified, so too did its religious

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<sup>555</sup> Plaisance was unique in this regard, as the tithe was applicable primarily to agricultural endeavours, leaving those who fished to work out an amicable arrangement with the religious authorities.

pillar become more integrated into daily life, resulting in a more effective integration of the spiritual and secular.

**Appendix A**  
**Documents 1687-1700**

**A.1**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 68.**

**Extrait de « Remarques que j'ai cru être nécessaires pour le bien du service dans les voyages de Terre-Neuve. »**

**1676**

**Terre-Neuve, Plaisance**

**Je devais dans cet établissement commencer par un aumônier comme étant la personne la plus nécessaire et la plus utile dans les nouvelles colonies soit pour y administrer les Sacrements soit pour y maintenir la religion qui n'est pas déjà trop bien établie dans ce lieu, ou on y a même perdu l'habitude d'y entendre la messe, n'y ayant jamais aucun prêtre que ceux qui viennent tous les ans dans les navires pêcheurs qui ne sont que pour leurs équipages et non pas pour lesd. Habitants, ce qui peut causer dans la suite de grands abus et être très préjudiciable à leur salut, à quoi on ne peut guère remédier que par le secours et l'assistance de S.M., lesd. Habitants ayant trop de peine de faire subsister par leur commerce leurs familles pour qu'ils puissent à leurs dépens en entretenir aucun.**

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**A.2**

**Memoire de Parat, 1686**

**in *Documents Relatifs*, vol. 1, 387-388.**

**Il ne reste plus par ses soins qu'une famille des Huguenots à Plaisance et un Anglois qui luy a demandé du tems pour se convertir. Cet Anglois est pauvre et chargé d'enfans. il a besoin de quelque charité, et sy on ne l'assiste, il s'en ira chez les Anglois au petit Nord.**

**Il fait de son côté ce qu'il peut pour ayder ceux qui ont abjuré, mais il seroit à propos de leur faire distribuer quelque chose.**

**Il envoie les certificats de leur abjuration.**

**Le Chirurgien du Fort étant Huguenot, il l'a renvoyé. Il l'a fait embarquer dans un vaisseau qui alloit à Marseilles et il en a pris un de Saint Malo.**

**Un Anglois luy fait offrir de venir s'habiter dans l'isle avec promesse de se faire catholique. Il l'a remis à l'année prochaine pour attendre les ordres, n'étant par d'avis de permettre aux Anglois de s'y établir, vu que tous ceux qui se sont faits catholiques, il y a longtemps, ne paroissent avoir aucune religion.**

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**A.3**

AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 13, 141.

Versailles

30 mars, 1687

Monsieur Parat,

Etant informé que le Religieux qui sert d'aumônier dans la Colonie de Plaisance y mène une vie scandalueuse et fort opposé au bon exemple qu'il devrait sonner dans un pays comme celui-là, je vous fais cette Lettre pour vous dire que mon intention est que vous ayez à l'envoyer en France par le premier vaisseau qui y viendra...

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**A.4**

AAQ, *Registre A.*

Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec à Seraphin Georgemé, Gardien du Couvent des Récollets de Notre-Dame des Anges près Québec.

Le 22, avril, 1689.

A nos frères bien-aimés Séraphin Georgemé, gardien du couvent des Récollets de N.-D. des Anges près Québec, et aux autres religieux de cette communauté destinés comme missionnaires à l'île de Terre-Neuve, salut dans le Seigneur.

Comme l'exige de nous la sollicitude pastorale, nous allons partir dans peu de jours pour visiter les contrées les plus reculées de notre diocèse et principalement l'île appelée Terre-Neuve. Voulant pourvoir au salut et à l'avancement spirituel des habitants de l'île et de tous les étrangers qui y abondent chaque année, nous avons résolu de vous adjoindre à nous comme compagnons de notre voyage et de nos labeurs. Ce faisant, notre dessein est que vous ayez, dans le village appelé Plaisance, un hospice ou même un couvent afin que vous puissiez plus facilement travailler au salut de ces peuples. Mais, comme pour l'érection d'un tel hospice ou couvent vous avez besoin de la permission et du roi et de l'évêque, permission que, du reste, vous demandez humblement, nous, par les présentes, autant qu'il est en nous, nous vous accordons pleinement et irrévocablement toute permission devant émaner de l'évêque. Il vous sers donc permis, en vertu et après réception de cette lettre, de construire dans le susdit village un hospice ou un couvent avec les ressources que vous fourniront de pieux bienfaiteurs, et vous pourrez y mener une vie conforme à la règle et aux coutumes de votre Ordre. En outre, autant que nous pouvons l'accorder et que vous le permettent les statuts de votre Ordre, nous voulons que la chapelle déjà

construite dans susdit village, les vases sacrés destinés au culte divin, ainsi que les vêtements sacerdotaux que vous y trouverez lors de votre visite, soient à vous pour tout le temps que vous y résiderez. Vous pourrez, avec notre approbation ou avec celle de nos vicaires généraux, comme il convient exercer le saint ministère, tant parmi les fidèles que parmi les infidèles demeurant soit dans le village soit dans les lieux voisins. Nous désirons aussi que la faculté que nous vous octroyons vous serve à obtenir l'autorisation royale, autorisation que sa Majesté très chrétienne, comme nous l'espérons, vous accordera sans difficulté.

Cependant la susdite permission ne vous est accordée de notre part qu'à la condition que vous soyez toujours prêts à exercer la charge pastorale soit par vous-mêmes soit par d'autres religieux de votre Ordre envoyés par le gardien ou tout autre supérieur du couvent de N.-D. des Anges près Québec, et munis auparavant de notre approbation ou de cellet de nos vicaires généraux. Enfin, désirant vous venir en aide dans une oeuvre si utile au salut des âmes, nous avons décrété de confier et donner à votre Ordre ladite paroisse de Plaisance érigée déjà ou encore à ériger par nous. Jusqu'ici la desserte de cette paroisse n'avait pas encore été confiée à un pasteur stable, car ni mon illustre prédécesseur ni nous, n'en avions établi en ce lieu. C'est pourquoi, par les présentes, autant qu'il est en notre pouvoir et moyennant l'autorisation du St.Siège, nous confions et unissons à votre Ordre et déclarons confiée et unie ladite paroisse de Plaisance à condition toutefois qu'un religieux déterminé, approuvé par nous ou par nos vicaires généraux, et présenté par le R. P. Gardien ou tout autre supérieur de N.-D. des Anges près Québec, réside dans ledit hospice ou couvent pour y exercer la charge pastorale. Mais en tout ceci, nous ne voulons léser en quoi que ce soit l'autorité dudit Gardien sur ses sujets. Nous désirons en outre que vous puissiez recevoir les aumônes du roi et les dons de personnes charitables, et nous vous accordons les dîmes et autres offrandes. En foi de quoi nous vous transmettons les présentes lettres, signées de notre main, munies de notre sceau et contresignées par notre secrétaire. Québec, l'an mil six cent quatre-vingt-neuf, le vingt trois du mois d'avril.

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A.5

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 170.

Parat au ministre, le 29 juillet 1689.

.....

M. l'Eveque de Québec est arrivé ici le 21 juin et parti le 12 du courant, il m'a remis une lettre de cachet du Roi avec un ordre pour faire embarquer l'aumônier de ce lieu et m'a prié de vouloir payer à ces Pères le reste des appointements de l'aumônier de la présente année, ce que j'ai fait d'abord quoque je n'ai pas de nouvelles s'ils ont été payés en France ou envoyés comme je m'étais donné l'honneur de vous le demander; mais il me souvient qu'il est bien rude de n'avoir

point d'aumônier au Fort, car ils se sont logés à la Grave pour leur commodité et il nous faut passer l'eau.....

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**A.6**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 166.

Pastour à St. Pierre, le 8 août 1689.

.....

On a fait une prise anglaise qui a donné à la côte, comme elle n'a donné aucun risque ni aucune peine à prendre, il croit qu'elle appartient au Roi, et il supplie de l'accorder aux Récollets qu'il a établis à Plaisance pour leur sonner moyen de s'établir encore dans plusieurs endroits de l'Ile.

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**A.7**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 167.

Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689

.....

On a fait revenir l'aumonier qui y était. M. l'Evêque y avait mené deux Récollets qui avaient fait un projet pour s'y établir et acheté une maison des aumônes des habitants.

Après le départ de M. l'Evêque avec lequel les Récollets ne vivent pas bien, l'un d'eux est revenue, et on apprend présentement que leurs supérieurs ont donné ordre pour faire revenir l'autre à la première occasion et de vendre cette maison.

Si Mgr. Ne trouve pas à propos de souffrir cette vente, il aura la bonté s'il lui plait, de donner ordre afin que cette maison soit remise à un aumônier pour se loger...

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**A.8**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 184.

Parat au ministre, le 4 septembre 1689.

.....

J'ai fait embarquer cette femme pour France avec la flotte qui a parti, l'aumônier est parti aussi avec le premier bâtiment conformément aux ordres du

Roi, il m'a demandé un certificat comme il avait bien servi et donné des marques exemplaires de sa conduite pendant 10 ans...

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A.9

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 185-189.

Parat au ministre, Du fort de Plaisance le 4 septembre 1689

.....

Vous me permettes, Monseigneur, de me dire que je ne crois pas pouvoir faire mon salut sans un aumonier au fort tant pour messes que prières qu'il faut faire soir et matin ne pouvant souvent passer à la grande grave où ils sont établis car souvent fait mauvais temps et quelque fois l'hiver que les bras de mer sont glacés ou demeure de deux mois qu'il n'y a aucune communication tant de la grande grave et petite grave où les habitants sont logés d'avec le fort et l'on ne saurait se secourir les uns avec les autres, je suis moi au fort et je n'ai aucun soldat sinon les deux caporaux que je nourris pour rien c'est-à-dire 5 sols par jour pour avoir quelqu'un qui entend le metier, l'officier s'est retiré à la grave sans congé ni une expresse défense, il m'a dit qu'il était nécessaire qu'il fût avec les soldats, je crois que c'est la pêcherie qu'il va entreprendre. Je me suis assez expliqué que la dépense que S.M. est fort inutile, l'officier et les soldats n'étant pas au fort, et si je ne fais pas ce que je crois pouvoir faire c'est la réprimande que vous me faites à la moindre chose. Si vous aviez la bonté de ne croire rien sans m'entendre, vous verriez, Monseigneur, que je n'ai pas tort et que je n'ai autre vue que le service du roi.

Quant aux pères ils ont acheté une habitation à la grande grave d'un habitant qui ne peut demeurer en ce pays pour y être toujours malade qui s'en va en France, il leur coûte 1200# : cabanes, grave et échaffauds et pour 4 chaloupes de pêcherie, ils en ont payé environ la moitié des charités qu'ils ont reçues cette année. Le P. Sixte s'en va en France, vous dira que j'ai fait beaucoup de difficultés par ce que cela occupe la plus belle grave et dans le dessein qu'ils ont d'enclorre tout cela fera un grand désordre pour la commodité publique, la grave est rare et faute de grave je manque d'avoir davantage d'habitants, vous y permettrez tout ce qu'il vous plaira. Il n'y a rien de plus juste ni de plus nécessaire qu'ils soient logés que s'ils avoient voulu prendre à une extrémité ils auraient été assez au large sans prendre le plus beau de la grave, et même là où il est l'église; il y a un habitant qui a trois jardins ou on pourrait en faire donner un pour l'église sans incommoder l'habitant et même la place est au roi comme appert par l'inventaire signé par les deux derniers gouverneurs. Je vous assure, Monseigneur, que deux séculiers, l'un à la grave et l'autre au fort il en aurait autant qu'il fallait et même M. l'Evêque n'a été qu'en prêtre à St. Pierre. Vous savez que les religieux ne sont jamais contents et qu'ils ont toujours des pierres d'assaut. Ils disent qu'ayant acheté la place il est loisible à eux d'en faire à leur

volonté; mais l'intéêt du tiers sonne, et de la manière qu'ils achètent et paient il est facile d'acquérir. Ayez la bonté, si je reste ici, de me faire la grâce de me mander s'il vient un prêtre, aumonier sur les vaisseaux marchands avec la permission de leur évêque, si je dois me mêler des différends où les pères prétendent qu'ils ne disent pas la messe et je prévois de grandes difficultés et brouilleries, ayez la bonté de me donner vos ordres par les premiers battiments de St. Jean de Luz ou de Nanter car sans cela je ne saurais que faire et de la manière que vous me maderez je le ferai et si vous souhaitez qu'on fasse une église faudrait faire venir des ouvriers de france... car de la marine que les pères veulent faut un grand secours du roi et d'une grande dépense.

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A.10

Transcribed from Le Tac, Xiste, *Histoire chronologique de la Nouvelle France*, edited by Eguène Réveillaud. Paris : G. Fischbacher, 1888. 236-237.

*« Contrat passé pour l'acquisition d'un établissement des PP. Récollets à Plaisance »*

Le 7 septembre, 1689.

A Plaisance.

Le septieme du mois de septembre mil six cent quatre vingt neuf dans la maison de Madame la Veuve Charpentier au grand Plaisance par devant les S<sup>rs</sup> De Harenardere & David, marchands, Dupré & Gilbert, habitants dudit Plaisance, Témoins, a été present en sa personne le sieur Jean Georges Jougla, habitant dudit lieu, lequel a déclaré avoir une habitation consistant sçavoir en une grave bornée par le nord au Terrain de l'Eglise du dit lieu, & par le sud par celui de Made la veuve Charpentier, à l'ouest par la grave du S<sup>r</sup>. Gilbert, par le norouest par celle de M<sup>re</sup> Philippe Zeimar, par l'est par l'eschaffault de Monsieur le Gouverneur, un Eschaffault, un Trouil pour l'huile, une maison gisante devant l'eschaffault de mon dit seig<sup>r</sup> le gouverneur, Terrain proche de la ditte maison, à elle appartenant & une cabane qui sert de logement aux pescheurs attenante à celle de mon dit Seig<sup>r</sup> le Gouverneur, ce qui est de la conformément à l'ordonnance de Sa Majesté. Dont voulant se defaire de son bon gré & volonté, en a fiat vente en presence des dits temoins à Monsieur Pastour de Costebelle. lieutenant commandant les soldats de la Garnison du fort de Plaisance & scindic des Reverends Pères Recollets du dit lieu, pour leur servir d'etablissement selon le reglement & ordre de Monseigneur l'Eveque de Quebec pour la somme de douze cent livres que le dit S<sup>r</sup> Jougla dit de la Forest confesse avoir reçu du dit sieur Pastour en la ditte qualité & promet que jamais demande ne luy sera faite, moyennant quoy le dit sieur Jougla veut & consent que les dits R<sup>ds</sup> Pères jouissent en toute propriété de la ditte habitation, appartenances & dependances comme il est expliqué cy dessus



ainsy qu'il en a jouy luy-meme à la reserve de cequ'il a accordé à mon dit Seig<sup>r</sup> le Gouverneur par un billet du dernier may de presente année 1689, ledit S<sup>r</sup> jougla garantissant la diite habitation libre de toutes debtes, hypothèques & pretensions quellesconques, & immeubles pour la seureté de la presente vente qu'il pretend devoir estre valable comme par devant Notaire. En foy de quoy il a singé en bas avec les temoins. Fait & passé au dit plaisance en Terreneuve le dit jour & an.

Jougla.

Pastour de Costabelle.

Pernaron de Haraneder.

F. David.

Bonafous dit Dupré.

P. Gilbert.

Nous Antoine Parat, Gouverneur pour le Roy à Plaisance & Isles de Terreneuve avons ratifié le contract cydessus soubz le bon plaisir de Sa Majesté, & y avons apposé le cachet de nos armes & fait signer par notre secretaire. Fait au fort de Plaisance ce huitiesme de septembre mil six cent quatre-vingt neuf.

Parat

[cachet des armes]

Couraud.

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A.11

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 190-193.

Pastour au ministre, le 8 septembre 1690.

Monseigneur,

Il n'y a point de raisons au monde qui m'eussent jamais obligé à en venir aux plaintes contre M. Parat si le désespoir où il m'a mis par le traitement indigne d'un honnête homme à l'égard d'un officier depuis la dernière que je me suis donné l'honneur de vous écrire ne m'eût obligé à en demander justice à la Cour et ne même temps mettre au jour bien des choses que j'ai cru devoir t'écrire jusqu'à présent à moins que d'un ordre de votre part. De plus, Monseigneur, je vous dirai que le voyage que Monsieur l'Evêque de Québec a fait en ce pays, lequel a été témoin des manières d'agir de l'un et de l'autre doit si fort autoriser tout ce que je suis obligé de vous écrire que je crois que vous ne me condamnerez point sur toutes ces suppositions que M. Parat vous pourra mander sur mon sujet ayant dit hautement qu'il n'oublierait rien pour que l'un ou l'autre fut relevé, sans être informé de la vérité de monsieur l'Evêque de Québec, de M. de Champigny et même de M. le Marquis de Denonville, quoique je n'aie pas l'honneur d'être connu de lui. C'est pourquoi, Monsieur, ne voulant pas vous ennuyer par des plaintes qu'on vous a déjà faites d'une malheureuse qu'il a gardée scandaleusement au fort, malgré son mari jusques à présent, de ses

manières d'agir brutalement au delà des bornes avec un chacun, des tyrannies qu'il peut avoir faites à St. Pierre à l'égard de quelques pauvres pupilles et pour l'affaire d'un homme qui fut tué à Fortune, non plus que d'une habitation qu'il a fait bâtir sur la grave des matériaux qu'il a fait charrier aux habitants supposant que c'était pour bâtir un fort. Je vous dirai, Monsieur, que M. Parat ne sachant rien moins que le métier de l'emploi où la fortune l'a mis, toutes choses lui faisant ombrage et particulièrement ma personne parcequ'il souhaiterait bien de n'avoir point de témoins de ses actions dans un pays aussi éloigné que celui ci m'a traité le plus indignement du monde à la porte d'une église m'ayant donné un démenti avec plusieurs autres injures que j'ai cru, Monseigneur, devoir souffrir à moins que j'eusse voulu me perdre quelle bonne cause que j'eusse pu avoir et si vous voulez que je vous apprenne une partie du sujet pourquoi je vous dirai, Monseigneur, que ce n'a été qu'à cause d'un banc que M. l'Evêque m'a permis de mettre dans l'église, comme il aurait pu faire à un simple particulier et à vous dire la vérité tout cela n'est provenu que de ce que M. l'Evêque lui a ôté cette femme mariée qu'il entretenoit, qu'il l'a beaucoup mortifié sur sa manière de vivre et dont il a cru que j'en étois la cause - comme si chacun ne s'étoit mis à crier contre lui dès que M. l'Evêque fut arrivé - , et le plus grand point de tout cela, Monseigneur, c'est parce que j'ai assisté de ma caution les Révérends Pères Récollets que M. l'Evêque a mis en ce pays, ne l'ayant fait qu'à sa prière et de ma personne étant mineurs sur l'achat qu'il leur a fallu faire d'une habitation pour leur couvent, et comme ces bons Pères lui font beaucoup d'obstacles en bien des choses, ils n'ont pas été exempts non plus que moi de ses brusqueries - jusque dans l'église - ainsi que vous l'apprendrez par le Supérieur que vous verrez à Versailles.

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A.12

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 140-141.

De Plaisance, ce 28 août 1690

Vive Jésus et Marie

Monseigneur,

Je me sens obligé comme missionnaire de Monseigneur de Québec en ce lieu de rendre la liberté de vous adresser ce petit mot pour vous supplier, Monseigneur, d'avoir pitié d'un pauvre peuple exposé à la furie de mille brigands et forbans anglais et renégats qui, désolés par les frégates de Saint-Malo, sont répandus par toute cette île et ne menacent rien moins cette pauvre colonie que d'une destruction entière.

Nous avons tout sujet, Monseigneur, de l'appréhender par l'épreuve fâcheuse que nous en avons faite cet hiver dernier, et si après avoir été dépouillés de tout et un emprisonnement de six semaines dans l'église durant les plus grandes rigueurs de l'hiver, nous avons eu la vie sauve, ça a été contre la volonté des habitants anglais qui ne voulaient épargner que les femmes pour les emmener avec eux dans leurs habitations, mais Dieu qui ne veut pas la mort du pécheur n'a par permis que les forbans fussent de leur sentiment!

Pour ce qui est de la manière dont les choses sont arrivées, non plus que d'autres désordres qui se sont passés ici, permettez-moi, Monseigneur, de me taire sur ce sujet, ne croyant pas qu'il soit permis à un pauvre religieux de Saint-François d'en prendre connaissance que pour y mettre la paix, et si ne le peut, d'en gémir devant Dieu et de lui offrir sans cesse ses vœux et sacrifice, afin qu'il vous inspire, Monseigneur, le remède nécessaire à tout ce que vous apprendrez par la personne de M. le Gouverneur qui a cru être obligé de s'en aller pour vous le faire connaître.

Je supplie donc Votre Excellence, par les entrailles de charité et de compassion de Notre-Seigneur et de sa Mère, d'avoir pitié de près de trente familles exposées non-seulement à la cruauté ordinaire des anglais, mais encore à l'inhumanité de misérables qui n'ont ni foi ni loi.

Excusez, Monseigneur, il n'en faut pas tant pour vous exciter à compassion, puisque naturellement vous êtes tout de bonté et de charité pour les pauvres misérables.

C'est dans cette confiance que nous attendons un prompt secours et soulagement avec le peu de force que nous avons, vous suppliant d'être persuadé que toute notre vie nous offrirons à Dieu nos vœux et nos prières pour la conservation de votre illustre personne et moi particulièrement, qui suis avec toutes sortes de respect dans l'amour de Jésus et de Marie,

Monseigneur,

Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.

F. Joseph Denys, Récollet.

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A.13

AN, Colonies., Series F, 132-1, vol. 1, 171.

A Plaisance, le 5 octobre, 1690

Monseigneur,

Quoique M. Parat ait abandonné son Gouvernement avec la dernière précipitation sans me charger de quoi que se soit ni me rien dire des moyens que je devais prendre pour conserver cette place mais seulement ayant fait comme un homme qui, saisi d'une peur panique dirait "Sauve qui peut" J'ai cru, Monseigneur, être obligé de me donner l'honneur de vous écrire encore celle ci

par le dernier navire, n'ayant pas de mon côté voulu jeter le manche après la cognée pour vous faire savoir la diligence avec laquelle les habitants de Plaisance se sont portés tous unanimement à la résolution que j'ai prise de faire un enclos pour mettre la colonie dans quelque défense contre les Anglais de la Côte, l'ardeur avec laquelle ils ont agi à tout ce que je leur ai commandé a fait qu'en moins de 15 jours de temps, ils ont parachevé l'enclos que je leur ai tracé autant que je l'ai pu et peux faire qui contient deux cent nonante six toises que je vous envoie et que j'ai tiré le mieux que j'ai pu, le tout de piquets époinçés de sept pieds et demi de haut, vous devez juger par là, Monseigneur, qu'ils sont bien aises de faire connaître au roi que les innocents ne doivent pas pâtir de la revoltes et déobéissance de celui que j'ai fait passer par les armes non plus que des plaintes que je me crois obligé de vous faire d'un habitant du Petit Plaisance qui n'a point d'enfants ni en état d'en avoir lequel est un impie achevé ayant été de la religion aussi bien que sa femme, de plus je vous dirai, Monseigneur, qu'il est mutin, séditieux et insolent autant qu'on le peut être, en un mot je puis vous assurer qu'il ne mériterait rien moins que d'être banni de ce pays en l'envoyant aux galères n'ayant pas besoin de ces gens là dans un pays comme celui-ci tenant la place d'un bon habitant qui voudrait travailler, qui aurait de la famille et qui vaudrait plus que celui-là: je le tiens aux fers à l'heure que je vous écris pour avoir dit mille impertinences et fait mille blasphèmes contre le religion travaillant les jours de fêtes et faire tout à sa tête. Je n'ai pas voulu dans cette recontre le punir aussi rigoureusement que j'aurais dû le faire avec justice. Je vous prie, Monseigneur, de me vouloir mander l'année prochaine, si vous n'envoyer pas un gouverneur, ce que vous voulez que j'en fasse aussi bien que de cette famille anglaise dont le frère a trahi cette colonie l'année passée et qui ne laisse pas encore que de donner des marques de son peu de soumission à tout ce que je puis leur donner pour conserver cette place et pour le service du roi.

Je serais présentement en état de pouvoir de défendre contre un assez grand nombre si j'avais tout le monde qui est dans l'habitation armé de bons fusils, mais c'est ce qui me manque n'en ayant pas 30 de bons dans le nombre de 100 hommes qui sont ici et la plupart tous domestiques et gens à fuir dans les bois, notre peu de force m'ayant obligé à nous enclorre plutôt pour intimider nos ennemis en cas qu'ils se présentent que pour leur pouvoir résister s'ils nous viennent attaquer. L'esperance que j'ai, Monseigneur, aussi bien que tous les habitants que vous nous enverrez du secours cet hiver a un peu fait prendre courage à tout le monde étant persuadé que vous ne laisserez pas toute cette nouvelle colonie d'une si grande importance que celle ci exposée à la rage de tous les Anglais de cette île par les ravages que leur sont allés faire les frégates de St. malo qui sont en courses sur ces côtes sans qu'elles soient venues à Plaisance ni apporter aucun secours. Toutes les prises qu'elles ont faites à la réserve d'un brigantin qui fut envoyé aux sollicitations de l'aumonier qui fut exprès à St. Pierre et dont le maître fut obligé de s'en retourner ayant de nom Dumourier qui montait une frégate de St. Malo de vendre ses marchandises plus cher qu'elle

n'ont jamais été nous voyant dans la nécessité nonobstant le malheur qui nous était arrivé d'avoir été pillés, à quoi le bon Dieu a pourvu dans la suite, je croyais qu'en envoyant des navires pour détruire les colonies anglaises de cette île vous enverriez en même temps des forces pour nous défendre contre des ennemis qui sont beaucoup plus forte que nous dont nous pouvons être attaqués de tous côtés ainsi que nous l'avons malheureusement éprouvé l'hiver passé. Je vous écris, Monseigneur, par tant d'endroits la même chose que je crois que vous aurez pitié de tout un peuple qui vous crie miséricorde, vous assurant de mon côté de prier Dieu pour votre prospérité me disant toujours avec un profond respect, Monseigneur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,  
Pastour

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#### **A.14**

**Archives de l'Archevêché de Québec. Registre A.**

**Reproduced in Henri Têtu and C.-O. Gagnon, Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec, vol. 1 (Québec: s.n., 1887) 288.**

**Jean, par la Grâce de Dieu et du Sint-Siège Apostolique, Evêque de Québec en la Nouvelle-France.**

**A nos Chers Enfants les habitants de Plaisance et des Iles Saint-Pierre, Salut et Bénédiction.**

**Je veux bien pour votre consolation, Mes Très Chers Enfants en Notre Seigneur, vous faire connaître par cette lettre que je ne vous oublie pas devant lui; je crois ne pouvoir vous en donner une meilleure preuve qu'en vous témoignant que j'ai pris tous les soins du monde de vous ménager quelques bons Religieux Récollets pour aller demeurer avec vous; comme je suis persuadé que nos misères temporelles ne viennent que du peu de soin que nous prenons à faire finir nos péchés, je vous prie par celle-ci de faire une véritable pénitence pour entrer dans l'esprit de l'Eglise et du Souverain Pontife que Notre Seigneur a voulu donner dans ce malheureux temps de guerre pour la consolation du monde chrétien; disposez-vous donc, Mes Très Chers Enfants, à recevoir les grâces qu'il veut bien vous procurer par le Jubilé. Il n'est point de péché dont vous ne puissiez avoir la rémission, il n'est point de grâce abondante que vous ne puissiez recevoir. Je prie Notre Seigneur de vous consoler dans votre pauvreté présente en vous enrichissant de ses grâces et de ses dons, je le supplie de tout mon cœur de vous donner la sainte crainte de l'offenser et son saint amour: ce sont les vœux que je fais et que je continuerai de faire pour vous avec toute l'affection et toute la tendresse dont je puis être capable.**

**Jean, Evêque de Québec**

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**A.15**

Transcribed from Le Tac, Xiste, *Histoire chronologique de la Nouvelle France*, edited by Eguène Réveillaud. Paris : G. Fischbacher, 1888. 240-241.

*Lettres Patentes en cire verte d'establissement du Roy pour Montreal, isle de Terre Neuve et autres lieux du Canada pour les Récollets.*

Louis, par la grâce de Dieu, etc. Notre ami & seal Conseiller en nos conseils, le Sr. Evesque de Quebec nous a fait remontrer qu'ayant à Quebec un couvent de religieux Récollets de l'ordre de St. François, il auroit disposé une partie desdits religieux dans divers endroits de la Nouvelle-France, isle de Terre-Neuve & autres lieux de l'Amerique septentrionale & particulièrement à Montreal, à Plaisance, & l'Isle St.-Pierre, desquels religieux les habitans de ces lieux auroient tiré tous les secours spirituels qu'on pouvoit attendre de leur zele & de leur piété, & desirant rendre certains les establissemens ausd. lieux affin de leur donner lieu de s'attacher de plus en plus aux missions & autres fonctions auxquelles ils sont appliquez. A ces causes, nous avons permis & permettons ausd. Recolets de continuer leur establisment tant en lad. ville de Quebec qu'aux lieux de Villemarie ou Montreal, Plaisance, Isle de Saint-Pierre & en tous autres lieux où ils seront jugés nécessaires, pourveu neantmoins que ce soit de l'advenu & consentement du Gouverneur & notre lieutenant general aud. pays & des habitans des lieux où ils voudront s'establir, dans tous lesquels lieux ils serviront d'aumoniers pour nos troupes & mesme y seront les fonctions curiales lorsque l'Evesque le jugera nécessaire & leur en donnera le pouvoir, voulant qu'ils recçoivent comme aumône les appointemens destinez par nos Estats pour les aumosniers de nosd. troupes. Comm' aussy nous avons amorty & amortissons par ces presentes signées de nostre main les eglises, logemens & cloistures des couvents establis & qui pourront l'estre cy après, sans que pour raison de ce ils soient tenus de nous payer ny à nos successeurs Roys aucunes finances, droits d'amortissement ou autre indemnité dont nous leur avons dès à présent fait don & remise par ces presentes. Si donnons en mandement à nos amez etc. Car tel est notre plaisir, etc. Données à Versailles, au mois de mars l'an de grace mil six cents quatre-vingt douze & de nostre regne le quarante-neufe. Signé: Louis, & sur le reply, par le Roy: Signé Phelypeaux & scellé, etc.

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**A.16**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 16, 206.

A M. du Brouillan

Versailles

1<sup>r</sup> Avril, 1692

M. l'Evêque de Québec en qui le Roi prend une entière confiance, fait passer presentement deux Récollets pour desservir les cures de Plaisance et de S. Pierre; s'il y avait quelque chose dans leur conduite que vous juge assiez répréhuis; M, vous pouvez en donner avis au dit Sr. Evêque, même faire des remontrances en particulier à ces Ecclesiastiques, et avec tache sorte de discrétion...

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**A.17**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 16-2, 223.

Estat

De ce qui doit estre payé

Aux officiers et a la garnison du fort de Plaisance l'année 1693.

.....

A l'aumosnier.....300 livres

.....

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**A.18**

AN, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 10, 121.

Etat des Ramplacements.

.....

Les Pères Recolets, possèdent une eglise, une maison avec un jardin et cour contenant 29 toises de long et 11 toises 5 pieds de large.

Un cimetière de 28 toises de long et 20 de large.

.....

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**A.19**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-1, 42.

A Mr. Desgrassieres.

A Versailles, le 10 Mars 1694.

.....

M. du Broüillant a demandé un tableau de St. Louis pour l'autel de la chapelle qu'il a fait bastir et quelques ornements pour cette chapelle. Vous trouverez a Nantes des gens qui l'ont veü et qui pourront sçavoir de quelle grandeur doit estre ce tableau; Je vous prie de le faire faire et de l'envoyer par l'un des viasseaux desdits Srs. Danguy ou Descasaud et de me faire sçavoir ce qu'il aura cousté, affin que je vous en fasse rembourser. Il ne faut pas que le tout passe 400 Livres.

.....

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.....

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A. 20

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-1, 55.

1694

A M. du Brouillant

dud. jour

[A Versailles le 10 mars 1694.]

.....

[Sa Majesté] a aprouvé... que vous ayiés pris de ses debris [Vaisseau Le Bob] ce qui a pu servir pour la construction de la chapelle que les habitans ont fait bastir [à Plaisance]. Elle a donné ordre pour vous envoyer un tableau de St. Louis pour le grand autel, et Elle veust bien aussy que vous fassiés employer jusqu'a 200 # pour achepver ce qui est a y faire. J'en feray faire le remboursement sur vos memoires certifiées.

.....

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A. 21

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-1, 58, 67.

1694

Aud. Sr. de Brouillant

Dud. Jour [A Versailles le 10 mars 1694.]

Le Pere Cosme Sigismond Recolet, estant repassé en France, Sa Majesté a donné ordre a son Supérieur d'envoyer un autre Religieux a sa place. Je ne doute point que vous ayiez menagé cet Ecclesiastique autant que vous avez pu, et qu'a l'avenir vous ne traitiez ceux qui passeront en Terreneuve avec les esgards deubs a leur caractere, et que vous ne les assistiez en tout ce que vous pourrez surtout dans leurs fonctions et que par le bon exemple que vous donnerez autant que par leurs exhortations, les sujets de Sa Majesté en soient excités au culte de la Religion, a assister au servie divin, et a garder les dimanches et les fetes.....

.....

Vous recevrez aussi peu apres par les vaisseaux de Nantes..... Le tableau de S. Louis et les ornemens pour la chapelle que vous avez demandé, ....

Non signé

[N.B. The letter prior to this, addressed from the same person to the same person as this one, was dated March 10, 1694]



**A. 22**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 17-3, 370-372.**

**Lettres par lesquelles le Roy confirme la concession que le Sr. Brouillan, Gouverneur de Plaisance a fait aux Récollets d'un terrain pour augmenter leur résidence et faire un cimetière.**

**22 mars, 1695**

**Louis par la grâce de Dieu Roy de France et de Navarre, à tous présents et avenir, Salut.**

**Les Pères Récollets établis à Plaisance nous ont fait très humbles remonstrances que le nombre de leurs Religieux étant augmenté ils n'ont pas assés de lieu pour les loger et que même leur cemitière n'ayant pas assés d'étendue ils se trouvent fort embarrassés quand il faut faire enterrer le corps de ceux qui meurent audit Plaisance, ce qui les a obligé d'avoir recours audit Sieur de Brouillan, Gouverneur dudit lieu pour obtenir sous votre bon plaisir un terrain convenable à l'étendue que leur résidence doit avoir, et comme en attendant notre lettre de confirmation, ledit Sieur de Brouillan leur a accordé vingt neuf toises de long, et onze toises trois pieds de large compris les bâtiments construits, et outre ce vingt cinq toises de long et y vinct toises de large pour augmenter leur cemitière, et que lesdits Religieux ne peuvent jouir de ce terrain sans avoir sur cela nos lettres de confirmation.**

**A ces causes nous leur avons concédé et par ces présentes signées de nostre main concedons led. terrain ainsy qu'il est marqué cy dessus pour en faire l'usages auquel il est destiné et pour en jouir par eux et les Religieux du mesme ordre qui leur succéderont à perpétuité comme de leur propre sans que pour ce ils soient tenus de nous payer ny à nos successeurs Roys aucune finance ny indemnité de laquelle à quelque somme qu'elle puisse monter nous leur avons fait don et remise par ces présentes.**

**Mandons au de Brouillant, Gouverneur dud. Plaisance et à tous aux Gouverneurs qui luy succederont de faire jouir les Pères Recolets du contenu en ces presentes et les Religieux du mesme ordre qui seront establis dans la suite aud. Lieu de Plaisance, cessant tous troubles et empeschements, car tel est nostre plaisir en tesmoin de quoy nous avons fait mettre nostre scel à ces présentes.**

**Donné, etc.**

**Non signé**

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**A. 23**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 19-1, 29**

**A Versailles, led. Jour 22 fevrier 1696**

**Estat de ce qu'il faut pour la Chapelle du Fort St. Louis de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terreneuve**

12 petits flambeaux de cire blanche  
36 petits cierges pour l'autel  
Un crucifix pour mettre sur l'autel  
Une pierre benite  
Une croix ordinaire  
2 fanaux d'Eglise

---

**A. 24**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 19-1, 78  
A M. de Villebon  
A Versaille, le 28 mars 1696

.....  
Vous verrés par l'Estat de Sa Maté. L'augmentation de 300# pour les Recolets missionnaires. Elle a esté bien aize d'apprendre que vous aviés sujet d'en estre satisfait, ainsy que des autres missionnaires...

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**A. 25**

AN, Colonies, Series C11A, vol. 120, fol. 14r.  
Excerpt from "Lettres et demandes particulieres du Canada", 1697.

.....  
La Mission de Plaisance sera augmentée cette année de deux Religieux Recolets. Comme ces Religieux vivent des aumonier des habitans et pescheurs, Ils supplient sa Ma<sup>te</sup> de les accorder une aumonie annuelle po<sup>r</sup> leur vestement, livres d'Eglise, et ornem<sup>ta</sup> d'autel.

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**A. 26**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 19-2, 49  
Etat des munitions à envoyer à Plaisance.  
Versailles  
30 janvier 1697

.....  
Une chasuble noire avec la bourse, l'étole/le manipule et le voile  
Un Missel  
Quatre corporaux  
Huit punificatoires

4 Serviettes pour la Communion  
8<sup>1</sup> de bougie pour l'autel  
32 Carreaux de vitre de 8 pouces de long est de 6 pouces de large pour la  
Chapelle  
20 aunes de toile pour mettre derrière les vitres  
Des monchettes de fer pour l'autel.  
.....

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**A. 27**  
AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 19-2, 57  
1697  
A Versailles  
Le 6 février 1697

Articles et conditions accordées au Sr. de Beaubriand Levesque pour le secours  
a porter au Fort Louis de Plaisance pour l'année 1697.

A l'aumosnier..... 300 livres.

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**A. 28**  
AN, Colonies, Serie B, vol. 20-1, 96.  
A Versailles, le 26 mars 1698.  
A M. de Villebon.

.....  
Vous devez surveiller a la conduite des Ecclesiastiques et les advertir en  
particulier et fraternellement des deffauts dans lesquels vous apprendrez qu'ils  
pourroient estre tombez et s'ils continuoient en donner advis a Sa Majesté et a  
M. l'Esveque. On est convenu icy avec les Supérieurs des Recolets et du  
consentement dud. Evesque que l'aumosnier du fort sera obligé d'y résider pour  
le desservir sans pouvoir s'absenter si ce n'est de vostre consentement.  
.....

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**A. 29**  
AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-1, 294.  
A Versailles, 21 juin 1698.  
A Mr Begon.

.....

Dans le fonds fait pour Plaisance, j'ay fait employer une somme de mille livres sur laquelle vous ferez prendre par preference les ornemens de l'Eglise, contenus dans le memoire cy joint, et le reste de cette somme servira a achepter des matelas, draps de lit et couvertures pour les soldats malades qui sont, a ce que j'ay appris couchez sur la paille ou dans des branles.

.....

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**A. 30**

AN, Colonies, Serie C11C, vol. 2, 170-171.

Costebelle au Ministre.

A Plaisance, le 23 novembre 1698.

.....

Le Religieux que le Supérieur des Récollets de Plaisance nous a donné pour servir la Chapelle du roi dans le fort, après avoir goûté l'air du pays, étant dans un âge où il ne serait pas défendu à une personne d'un état différent de celui d'un Récollet de donner dans une coterie agréable, s'est mêlé imprudemment parmi celle de quelques femmes qui l'ont entraîné à faire ici plusieurs démarches contraires à celles d'un bon exemple, sans aucun crime apparent que celui de chercher l'occasion d'y tomber et d'avoir découché quelquefois du fort où sa cellule est jointe à l'église: je me lassai d'entendre faire un grand nombre de méchants comptes sur ce sujet, auquel étant en droit de remédier par la voie de son Supérieur j'allai à son couvent où ne l'ayant pas trouvé, je lui écrivis le lendemain en ces termes:

"Mon Révérend père, je fus hier à votre couvent pour avoir l'honneur de vous voir et celui de vous entretenir de la conduite de l'aumonier que vous nous avez donné pour servir la chapelle du roi au fort Louis; elle est si peu conforme à son état que je suis persuadé que vous le corrigerez sévèrement; si l'ordre ne lui avait laissé aucun supérieur par l'autorité que le roi m'y donne, je n'aurais pas tardé si longtemps d'y mettre fin, je remets à notre première entrevue à vous faire un détail il est un peu trop long pour écrire, tout ce que je puis vous dire en homme qui m'y connaît, il est trop jeune et manque d'expérience pour être abandonné à sa seule conduite, sans qu'il y ait autre chose qui doive m'y intéresser que le bien du public et le service de Dieu; pour le punir rappelez-le quelque temps auprès de vous, je vous le demande et suis, mon révérend père...

Le Supérieur reçut mon honnêteté comme un très digne religieux tel qu'il paraît par la conduite sérieuse et exemplaire qu'il tient ici. Il rappela ce même jour la jeune père Félix et lui donna son obédience pour repasser en France après avoir ouï toutes les choses de son égarement. Le père Félix vint sur le champ me prier avec un air humble et suppliant qui confessait assez qu'on lui rendait justice de vouloir adoucir l'esprit de son Supérieur, ce que je lui promis, mais il n'eut pas besoin de mon secours. Il le fit le même soir si bien

lui-même, qu'ils vinrent le lendemain ensemble me demander justice contre ses accusateurs qu'il appelle des calomniateurs et dont il vouloit sur le champ qu'on fit une punition exemplaire. Pour éviter une plus honteuse discussion pour le jeune aumonier, je lui répondis qu'il fallait châtier tous ceux qui avaient eu des yeux et des oreilles, que j'étais un des plus criminels le lui ayant révélé qu'ainsi, comme je ne dépendais ici que le roi, je le priais de suspendre l'exécution et qu'à l'égard de la peine de son religieux c'était à lui d'en disposer à son gré.

J'ai des exemples, Monseigneur, que les affaires les plus innocentes et les plus justes s'empoisonnent ordinairement pas les moines qu'ils font des volumes pernicieux de la conduite de leurs adversaires sur des cas quelquefois aussi délicats que ceux de la religion (qui sont leurs armes ordinaires) les moindres accusations désagréables. C'est ce qui m'oblige de faire le détail à Votre Grandeur de ce qui s'est passé sur ce sujet si j'avais moins bonne opinion de moi et que j'osasse douter de la confiance que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de témoigner pour tout ce que j'ai fait jusqu'à présent, j'aurais pris des voies de formalités confirmées par plusieurs personnes incorruptibles pour assurer Votre Grandeur de cette vérité,

Ceux que le religieux a accusés de m'avoir rapporté ces faits ont été menacés des fulminations de l'église, d'être éloignés des Sacrements. Je puis protester qu'ils n'en sauraient citer de plus coupables que lui et les désordres ne cesseront jamais dans ce pays si l'on n'accorde un prêtre séculier en place pour servir d'aumônier dans le fort.

.....

signé: de Costebelle

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A. 31

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-2, 216.

A Versailles, le 27 may 1699

A M. l'Evesque de Quebec

.....

Le Sr. de Costebelle, Lieutenant du Roy de Plaisance s'est plaint que le Religieux Récollet qui sert d'aumosnier au fort tient une conduite trop libre et suspecte quoy qu'au fond on ne luy ayt veu faire aucun mal, et qu'en ayant parlé a son Supérieur, il luy promit d'abord d'y donner ordre, mais dans la suite il soutint cet aumosnier sous le pretexte de l'honneur de son ordre. Il est nécessaire que vous preniez la peine de faire examiner sans bruit ce qui s'est passé a cet esgard, et s'il n'y avoit qu'à changer cet aumosnier pour le bien de la paix et pour éviter un plus grand scandale, je croirois qu'il seroit a propos de la faire.

.....

non signé

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**A. 32**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 20-2, 132.**

**A Versailles, 15 avril, 1699.**

**A M de Costebelle.**

**J'ay veu ce que vous m'escrivez au sujet de l'aumosnier du fort de Plaisance.  
J'en escris a M. l'Evesque de Québec afin qu'il y donne ordre.**

**.....**

**Sa M. a destiné quelques frégates pour course sur les forbans qui ont paru l'année dernière sur la cote de Terre Neuve.... Il sera nécessaire que vous m'informiez de ce que vous ferez à cet égard vous m'auriez fait plaisir de m'informer plus particulièrement que vous n'avez faict de ce qui regarde ces forbans et surtout de me faire savoir d'ou ils sont partis et de quelles nations ils sont, tachez de le savoir par le moyen du nègre qu'ils ont donné au gardien des Récollets et de ceux qui leur ont parlé...**

**Non signé**

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**A. 33**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-1, 88-89.**

**A Versailles, le 3 mars 1700**

**Estat des ornemens d'Eglise Ustencilles d'hospitaux Raffraischissemens et toilles qui seront acheptées sur le fonds de mille livres accordé par Sa Maj.é pour Plaisance.**

**.....**

**Pour la Chapelle**

**Deux Dalmatiques noires**

**Une Etolle noire**

**Deux Manipules noires**

**Une Chappe noire**

**Deux corporaillers**

**Un surplis**

**Quatre aubes**

**Quatre ceintures**

**Quatre amits**

**Une boette remplie de 300 pains pour la Ste. Messe et 200 pour la communion**

**Quatre douzaines de cierges de cire blanche**

**Deux douzaines de cierges de cire jaune**

**Douze livres de Boujie pour l'autel pour l'hyver**

**Un missal nouveau à l'usage de l'ordre de St. François**

**Deux l'arriques de Charbon de bois pour l'autel  
Quatre flambeaux**

.....

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**A. 34**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, fol. 37r-38v.**

**Terre-Neuve 1700**

**Le S<sup>r</sup>. de Costebelle, 8 septembre 1700**

**Je me suis donné l'honneur d'informer votre grandeur par le premier vaisseau parti de ce port dès la fin du mois de Juliet de tout ce qui se passoit dans cette Colonie**

.....

**Le Père Olivier commissaire dans l'ordre des Récollets du Canada qui a passé à Plaisance nous a appris la mort de Monsieur de Villebon gouverneur de l'Acadie. Si par le choix de votre gradeur et par mes assidus service il m'étoit permis d'aspirer à cette place vaquante je suis persuadé qu'elle seroit si satisfait de l'application continuelle...**

**Signé: de Costebelle**

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**A. 35**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, fol. 41.**

**Monic au Ministre.**

**A Plaisance, ce 30 septembre, 1700**

**Monseigneur,**

.....

**De trois pères Recolets qui étaient ici pour tenir le fort et la colonie il n'en reste plus qu'un très jeune: ainsi, monseigneur, il est à juger que la garnison pour laquelle le roi en paie un sera bien mal servie, à quoi je vous supplie très humblement de mettre ordre. Il m'est revenu que lesd. Pères ont envie d'abandonner cette mission, si cela est j'ose vous assurer que deux de nos bons vicaires de France destinés pour le fort et l'habitation conviendront beaucoup mieux que qui que ce soit.**

.....

**Signé: Monic**

**A. 36**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, fol. 69-70.**

**Le Sr. Monic à Plaisance le 22 oct. 1700**

**Monsieigneur,**

Tous les navires étant partis Il ne me reste que l'occasion d'un bâtiment de Bourdeaux pour avoir l'honneur de vous informer de la mauvais conduite d'un nommé Barat notaire et greffier, que j'ay trouvé ébably icy, lequel, depuis cinq ou six ans ayant reçu en dépôt comme une chose sacrée mille livres qu'un homme en mourant avoit laissé et destiné pour les deux Eglises qu'il y a icy, est hors détat de les rendre jamais, exerce d'ailleurs très indignement son office n'ayant avant de venir ici fait autre métier que celui de bateleur; ce qui, Monsieigneur, vous sera certifié par le père supérieur des récollets d'icy, qui aura l'honneur de vous faire voir les deux billets conernant ce dépôt, dont led. Barat est Insolvable et par conséquent Incapable de continuer l'exercise d'un homme public, auquel après cela vous aurés la bonté de pourvoir si vous jugés à propos.

.....

signé : de Monic.

---

**A. 37**

**Series B, vol. 15, 273.**

**Transcribed from Hugolin Lemay, *L'Etablissement des Récollets de la Province de Saint-Denis à Plaisance en l'Ile de Terre-Neuve, 1689.* Quebec : s.n., 1911. 6.**

**Ordre du Roy**

**Pour faire passer un Ecclesiastique en Terreneuve.**

**De par le Roy**

**Il est ordonné à .....**

**Capitaine du navire le .....**

**De toucher a la Baye de Plaisance dans l'Ile de Terreneuve en allant en Canada pour y laisser les Ecclesiastiques que le Sr. Evesque de Quebec y envoie pour servir les cures de ladite Isle, et ce sous peine de desobeissance.**

.....

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**A. 38**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 1, 242.**

**De Brouillan au ministre.**

**Au fort Louis de Plaisance.**

**le 7 octobre 1693.**

.....



Pour répondre à ce que vous désirez qu'on observe à l'égard du respect qu'on doit rendre aux ecclésiastiques, je tiens la main autant que je le puis afin que personne ne s'écarte au devoir de chrétien. On comprend assez à cela près qu'on ne saurait empêcher Messieurs les marchands, et souvent sans nécessité les jours de dimanches et les fêtes même jusqu'aux plus solennelles, comme cela esta rrvé cette année le jour de la pentecôte que le Sr Joubert dont je vous ai déjà dépeint le caractère eut assez peu de religion pour obliger quelques honnes de son équipage à scier des planches malgré eux à la porte de l'Eglise pendant la messe et le reste de la journée jusqu'a l'heure des vêpres que je m'en aperçus allant à la bénédiction du St. Sacrement qui était exposé ce qui m'obligea d'envoyer six de ses ouvriers en prison qui ne furent retenus qu'un jour pour ne pas interrompre son commerce. Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous marquer par mes lettres de l'année 1691 que cela était ici en usage et que vous ne m'avez rien mandé touchant cet artcile j'ai toléré plusieurs choses de même que je ne vois qu'avec une vive douleur dans le coeur, c'est que j'ai cru devoir vous exposer pour ne pas m'attirer entièrement l'indignation des ecclésiastiques qui sont en ce lieu qui se sont plaints à moi très souvent de ces sortes de scandales, mais comme je n'avais pas des ordres particuliers là dessus je n'ai pas voulu ordonner la punition que méritèrent ceux qui le font dans une véritable nécessité avec la permission du *curé* et de la police comme cela se pratique en france.

.....

**Appendix B**  
**Documents 1701-1716**

**B.1**

**AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 23-3, fol 21-24.**

**Memoire**

**pour servir d'Instruction au Sr. de Subercase, gouverneur de l'Isle de  
Terreneuve, et du Fort Louis de Plaisance  
no location or date given**

L'Intention de Sa Maté est qu'avant toutes choses, il ayt soin de procurer dans le gouvernement la gloire de Dieu, qu'il scutienne les eclesiastiques dans leur ministere, qu'il leur fasse porter le respect qui leur est deu et qu'il tienne la main a ce que le service divin se fasse avec la decense necessaire. Il reglera avec les Ecclesiastiques, si cela n'est pas fait, les heures ausquelles il devra estre celebré, pour la commodité des Ecclesiastiques, des habitans et des marchands qui font commerce a Plaisance; il aura soin d'empescher les blasphemes, les debauches et les desordres autant qu'il se pourra, en se consuissant cependant avec la sagesse necessaire pour les faire cesser sans scandale. il doit estre informé qu'il y en a ce pays quatre Religieux Recolets de la province de Bretagne; un d'eux sert d'aumosnier dans le fort; deux des autres desservent la cure et le quartrisme est destiné pour les Isles St. Pierre.

Sa Maté fait payer l'aumosnier du fort sur le pied de trois cens livres par an. Elle fait donner un suplement de cent cinquante livres aux trois autres qui subsistent particulièrement au moyen d'une retribution que ceu qui font la pesche leur donnent.

Il y a eu cy devant des plaintes contre les Religieux qui ont servy d'aumosniers dans le Fort. Mr. l'Evesque de Quebec a pretendu pour y remedier que cet aumosnier apres avoir dit la Messe, administroit les sacremens suivant les besoins et fait les Instructions necessaires, pouvoir se retirer dans l'hospice ou sont les autres Religieux; quelques officiers de la place ont pretendu que cela n'estoit pas praticable a cause de la difficulté d'aller et venir. Il examinera sur les lieux ce qui en est. il est certain qu'il conviendrait a un Religieux de demeurer avec ses freres, lorsque sa presence n'est pas necessaires dans le fort, mais les difficultz pourroient estre telles que cela ne seroit pas possible. Il ne changera rien cependant a ce qui est actuellement estably; il se contentera de faire scavoir ce qui se fait a cet egard et son avis pour l'avenir, sur quoy Sa Maté. donnera ensuite les ordres qu'elle estimera necessaires.

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**B.2**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 22-3, 129.**

**Au Sr. de Monic**

**No date or location**

...

J'ai conféré avec M. l'Evesque de Quebec sur le peu d'Ecclésiastiques qu'il y a en l'Isle de Terre-neuve. Il ne croit pas qu'on puisse trouver des prestres seculiers qui veüillent s'y aller establier ny en ayant pas assez pour les autres Colonies, mais il fail espérer que le Provincial des Récolletz de la Province de Bretagne pourroit se charger de vous envoyer le nombre suffisant de Religieux; j'en ay escrit au Provincial qui me marque qu'il voudra bien s'en charger, et j'aurai soin qu'il en envoie dez cette année, mais comme les Religieux qui ont servi dans cette Colonie se sont plaints du peu d'esgards qu'on a pour leur caractere, il est nécessaire que vous leur fassiez porter par les officiers, les soldats et le peuple le respect qui leur est deü, a quoy vous pouvez plus contribuer par vos exemples que par aucun autre moyen.

...

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### **B.3**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 213-213v.

Extrait des Lettres de Plaisance en l'Isle de Terre-Neuve

.....

Le Père Antonin Relig<sup>x</sup> Recolé aux Iles St. Pierre le 25 7<sup>bre</sup> [1701]

Les aumônes qu'il retire des habitans de ce quartier sont si peu considérables qu'il luy est impossible de subsister sans quelque secours de Sa M<sup>te</sup> et il demande 2 à 300 # par an.

Il supplie aussy s'ordonner aux habitans que la plus part n'ont aucune teinture de religion d'assister à la Messe les dimanches et les jours des principales festes afin qu'il puisse trouver quelque temps pour les instruire.

Il seroit nécessaire aussy pour les y engager de deffendre aux cabaretiers de donner à boire pendant le service divin parce que c'est souvent ce qui les empeche d'aller à la Messe.

.....

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### **B.4**

AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 22-3, 51, 52

A Versailles, le 23 Mars 1701.

Memoire du Roy aux Srs. De Brouillan, Gouverneur de l'Isle de Terreneuve, choisy par S.M. pour commander dans la Province de l'Acadie.

Le spirituel de cette Colonie est entre les mains de quelques prestres des Missions Estrangeres et de quelques Récollets.

.....

**Le Recolet qui est destiné pour servir d'aumosnier au Fort a 300 Livres d'appointement et les deux autres Recolets ont chacun 200 Livres de Sa Majesté, et le tres petits casuels dans les endroits ou ils sont.**

**Sa Majesté esté infomrée que le Supérieur des ces Récollets en france reçoivent(sic) 400 Livres sans envoyer aucun secours a leurs Religieux de ce pays, a donné ordre au Sr. Begon, intendant a Rochefort de les leur envoyer directement sans les faire passer par les mains des Récollets de France.**

.....

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**B.5**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 22-3, 149.**

**Au Sr. de monic.**

**A Versailles le 13 avril 1701**

...

**Le Roy a chargé le Provincial des Récollets de Bretagne d'envoyer a Plaisance trois Religieux de son ordre sçavoir un pour faire les fonctions d'aumosnier dans le fort, et les deux autres de Curez des habitants. Sa Majesté desire que vous les establissiez et que vous teniez la main a ce qu'on leur paye les retributions qu'ils ont accoustumé d'avoir, et a ce que la garnison et les habitants ayent pour eux les esganrd qui sont deux a leur caractere.**

...

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**B.6**

**AN, Colonies Series B, vol. 22-4, 180.**

**Au Sr. de Monic.**

**A Versailles le 11 May (sic.) [1701]**

.....

**Les deux Religieux Recolets qui vont a Plaisance pour servir la Colonie ont demandé a Sa Majesté cent cinquante Livres pour chacun prétendant qu'il ne leur sera pas impossible de subsister avec le simple casuel. Sa Majesté veut estre informé auparavant a quoi monte ce casuel, et il est nécessaire que vous me le fassiez sçavoir en reponse de cette lettre.**

.....

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**B.7**

**AN, Colonies, Serie C11C, vol. 3, 187.**

**Monic au ministre.**

**Plaisance, le 27 novembre 1701.**

**Monsieur,**

...

Il me paraît jusqu'à présent, Monseigneur, que les trois pères Récollets, que le Provincial de Bretagne a choisis pour ce pays sont d'honnêtes gens et bons religieux, si tous ceux qui les ont précédés avaient été bien sages, ils ne se seraient jamais plaints qu'on eût manqué à leur égard, je n'ai cependant jamais oui dire que personne eut oublié leurs caractères, quique néanmoins le dernier parti par l'Avenant, nommé Père Félix a donné au public dont je suis du nombre bien des sujets de reproche et de mécontentement et jusque là qu'il m'a forcé un jour par sa manière de parler peu sensée de le sortir de ma maison.

Au surplus, Monseigneur, je tiendrai la main à la rétribution volontaire qu'on a accoutumé de leur donner qui est si peu de chose aussi bien que le casuel qu'il leur sera très difficile de subsister si vous n'avez la bonté de leur procurer les 300 livres qu'ils vous ont demandées.

---

**B.8**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 33-44, 37, 40.

A M. Begon.

A Versailles, le 11 janvier 1702

.....

Les Religieux Recolets qui sont en ce pays se plaignent que leur Supérieurs qui reçoivent leurs appointemens en France ne leur envoient aucuns secours, l'intention du Roy est que vous fassiez employer les quatre cens livres qui leur sont accordées par l'Estat de ce pays en choses qui leur puissent estre propres et que vous en usiez de mesme pour les trois cens livres de l'Aumosnier du fort.

.....

Les Religieux Recolets de la Province de Bretagne qui servent en Terre-neuve, non seulement ne se plaignent point de leur Supérieur, mais ils demandent mesme qu'on leur fasse remettre leur argent, afin qu'ils puissent leur acheter leurs besoins. Il doit y avoir trois cens livres d'une part pour l'aumosnier du fort et cent cinquante livres que Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> a bien voulu donner par aumosne cette année; ayez soin que ce que ce Supérieur fera acheter soit embarqué sur le Vaisseau que vous enverrez.

.....

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**B.9**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 3-47. Etats des Munitions et Marchandises.  
Fort St. Louis de Plaisance.

4 Flambeaux.....	20
6 douzaines de cierges.....	70
3 douzaines if. cire jaune.....	42
1. bougies pour l'autel.....	24
3 canons sur carte.....	12
400 pains a dire la Messe.....	3
300 id. pour la Communion.....	1.2.6
1 fer pour couper les pains.....	4.10
1 millier d'épingles.....	1
12 aunes de drap vert, cy.....	144
4 chandeliers de cuivre.....	8
2 paires de mouchettes.....	1.4

Fait a Versailles, le 11e janvier 1702.

Signé : Louis

Phelypeaux.

#### **B.10**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-1, 48.

M. l'Evesque de Quebec.

A Versailles, le 15e fevrier 1702.

.....

Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> a aussy trouvé bon qu'on envoyast des ordres en Terreneuve pour faire observer plus religieusement a l'avenir qu'on ne fait par passé les dimanches et jours de festes et vous devez compter qu'ils seront envoyez.

Elle a bien voulu accorder cinquante excus d'ausmone aux Religieux Recolets qui servent en cette Colonie dont vous paroissez estre contant et je donne ordre a M. Begon de faire compter cette somme a leur provincial aussy bien que les trois cens livres destinées pour l'aumosnier du fort.

Je proposeray au Gouverneur de Plaisance de permettre a cet aumosnier d'aller prendre ses repas dans le couvent, s'il n'y a point d'inconvenient a le faire.

Signé.

#### **B.11**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 358.

A M. Begon

A Versailles, le premier Mars 1702

.....

Je vous ay escrit que vous pourriez faire donner jusqu'a quatre cens cinquante livres au provincial des Récollets de la Province de Bretagne qui sont en Terre neuve sçavoir trois cens livres pour l'aumosnier du Fort de Plaisance et cent cinquante livres d'aumosnes aux autres.

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**B.12**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 23-2, 448-449.

A M. de Monic.

A Versailles, le 22e Mars 1702.

.....

Je vois aussy avec beaucoup de satisfaction que vous soyiez content des Religieux Recolets que le provincial de Bretagne a envoyé en Terre neuve, excitez les marchnards et les habitans a leur continuer leurs charitez qu'ils ont coutume de leur faire afin qu'ils puissent subsister. Cependant Sa Majesté leur a accordé cent cinquante livres d'Aumosne pour ayder leur subsistance.

Sa Majesté n'a pas pretendue qu'on retint sur le fonds des fortifications de Plaisance de l'année derniere les quatre cens livres qu'Elle accorda a ces Religieux et je vous en fais remettre le fons. Ce Provincial m'a fait dire qu'il desireroit que le Religieux qui sert d'aumosnier dans ce Fort pust aller prendre ses repas et coucher dans l'auspice qui est estably à Plaisance cela conviendrait beaucoup mieux a son caratere que d'estre tout le long du jour parmy des soldats ainsi S. Majesté desire que vous le luy permettiez bien etendu qu'il restera dans le Fort quand il y aura des officiers ou des soldats dangereusement malades pour pouvoir les assister et leur administrer les Sacremens.

.....

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**B.13**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 4, 150.

Extraits des Lettres de Plaisance 1703.

.....

M. l'Evêque de Québec

La difficulté qu'on a eue de trouver des ecclésiastiques de bonnes moeurs pour servir la cure de Plaisance et autres pays habités de l'Isle de Terre Neuve l'oblige de supplier de confirmer Aux Peres Récollets de la Province de Bretagne qui s'en s'ont chargée, la gratification de 200# qu'on leur donna l'année dernière par la même raison.

Il a donné au Supérieur de ces Religieux les pouvoirs de son Grand-Vicaire, mais les aumosniers des vaisseaux marchnads ont de la peine à se soumettre à lui et ils ne s'y réduisent point que l'autorité du Roi n'y paraisse il supplie le Gouverneur de la protéger dans les fonctions de Grand Vicaire.

.....

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**B.14**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 25, 67.

A M. de Subercaze.

A Versailles, le 2 avril 1704

.....

M. l'Evesque de Quebec a conféré les pouvoirs de son grand vicaire au Supérieur des Religieux Recolets qui sont à Plaisance; l'intention de Sa Majesté est que les aumosniers ayent pour ly les esgards deus à ce caratere et qu'ils suivent et executent ses ordres dans l'exercise de leur ministère.

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**B.15**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 27-1, 235.

Le Ministre Au Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne.

A Marly, le 25 Avril 1705.

J'ay receu la lettre que vous m'avez escrit le 28 decembre le Roy a bien voulu accorder aux Recolets qui sont a Plaisance les 450# pour lesquels ils sont employez sur les Etats de cette Colonie avec 200# de gratification de mesme que l'année passée comme le V<sup>au</sup> que Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> y envoie part de Rochefort je fais remettre cet argent en ce port, vous pouvez vous adresser a Mr. Begon intendant de la marine pour le retirer et l'employer a l'achat des choses dont ces religieux ont besoin il est mesme necessaire que vous vous pressiez pour cela parceque ce V<sup>au</sup> Sera bientot en estat de partir.

.....

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**B.16**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 27-1, 239.

A M. de Subercaze.

A Marly le p.er May 1705.

.....

Elle [Sa Majesté] a veu aussy avec beaucoup de satisfaction que vous soyez tres conten des Religieux Récollets qui sont en ce pays. Elle desire que vous continuiez de leur donner la protection dont ils ont besoin dans l'exercise de leur ministere...

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**B.17**



AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 27-1, 263.

A M. Begon.

A Marly le 3 May 1705.

.....

Le Provincial des Récollets de Bretagne m'écrit qu'il est chargé de recevoir les 450# que Sa Ma.té a accordé aux Religieux de son ordre qui sont a Plaisance, avec les 200# de gratiff.on qu'Elle leur donne aussy, je luy fais repondre que je fais remettre cet argent a Rochefort et qu'il peust sadresser a vous pour faire retirer et l'employer a l'achapt des choses dont ces Religieux ont besoin, vous m'aurez qu'a le luy faire payer.

.....

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**B.18**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 27-4, 701.

A Mr de Subercaze.

A Versailles, le 22 may 1706.

.....

J'ay rendu compte a Sa Ma.té de ce que vous mescrivez au sujet d'un prestre scandaleux qu'il y a dans cette Colonie Sa Ma.té desire que vous en conferez avec le Superieur des Recolets qui est grand vicaire de Mr. LEvesque de Quebec en cette isle et si les faits paroissent assez graves pour le faire sortir de l'isle qu'on le fasse embarquer sur les premiers V.aux qui passeront en france j'ecris en conformité au d. Sr de Costebelle.

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**B.19**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 5, 345, 346.

Etat des fonds que le roi veut et ordonne être remis nécessairement au port de Rochefort par Messire Michel Eberard, trésorier Général de la Marine, pour employer aux dépenses faites et à faire à Plaisance pour le service de S.M. pendant le présente année 1707.

A l'aumonier la somme de ..... 300#

A trois Religieux Récollets de la Province

de Bretagne, servant au dit pays par

aumône, la somme de ..... 150#

.....

aux religieux Récollets qui deservent

au dit pays par gratification extraordinaire

la somme de ..... 200#

---

**B.20**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 29-2, 376.

Le Ministre Au Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne.

A Marly le 25. May 1707.

.....

Jay receu Mon Reverend Pere la lettre que vous m'avez escrit le 25. Du mois de fevrier dernier le Roy a donné ordre au Tresorier general de la Marine qui est en exercice de payer des a present les appointmens et gratiffication que Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> veut bien accorder aux Recolets qui servent a Plaisance affin qu'on puisse leur achepter les choses dont ils ont besoin pour estre chargées sur le V<sup>au</sup> que Sa Ma<sup>te</sup> doit faire partir dans le fin de ce mois pour porter du secours a cette colonie. J'ay esté bien aise de vous donner cet avis.

.....

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**B.21**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 5, 238.

Le Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne

29 février 1707.

Il supplie d'ordonner dès à présent les appointements et gratiffications que S.M. accorde aux Recolets de Plaisance, afin qu'il puisse leur envoyer les choses dont ils ont besoin pour leur subsistence et entretien.

.....

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**B.22**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 29-2, 441-442

A M. de Costebelle.

A Versailles, le 10 aout 1707.

Sur un avis qui ma resté donné que le Sr. de St.-Ovide vostre Lieutenant de Roy avoit une affaire à Plaisance au sujet de la fille d'un habitant quil a debausché sous promesse de mariage j'ay escrit aud. Sr de St.-Ovide qui m'a assuré n'avoir jamais donné la promesse et qu'il pretendoit avoir des raisons de consciences invincibles pour ne pas l'espouser il pretend mesme que par accord fait entre luy et les parens de cette fille il luy a donné une somme de 2000 livres dont il estoit convenu par l'entremise du Pere fleurend Récollet aumosnier du fort et du Pere hyacinthe Bernard de l'ordre de St.-Dominique qui servoit d'aumosnier sur le fluste la Loire il est necessaire que vous examiniez ces faits et que vous me fassiez scavoir tout ce qui s'est passé sur cela et en cas

qu'il vous paroisse que cette affaire doive causer des troubles dans la Colonie ne manquez pas de m'en donner avis.

Signé

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**B.23**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 5, 171.

Costebelle au Ministre.

A Plaisance, ce 10 Novembre 1707.

.....

Au sujet de l'éclaircissement que Votre Grandeur me demande sur les mesures que j'ai prises pour l'entretien de l'hopital, elle sera informée qu'il est très difficile de trouver dans ce pays des personnes capables d'une semblable direction, comme il est cependant nécessaire de faire un choix le plus avantageux qui se puisse pratiquer je me suis déterminé à changer de ces soins le Sr. Viarieu, churrurgien major de la place, qui est très entendu pour le soulagement des malades et très appliqué à les secourir dans toutes sortes d'infirmités; il y a établi deux sages garçons pour y veiller lorsque ses fonctions l'appellent ailleurs. J'ai demandé au père Supérieur des Récollets de Québec un frère Auchapeau que je connais pour une personne entièrement dévouée au service de Dieu, fort laborieux, pour l'entretien des logements, des jardins et pour l'économie des concommations, je ne doute pas que lesd. Supérieurs de l'ordre de Québec ne me l'envoient par la première occasion. Quant au revenu cela est réglé suivant le nombre des chaloupes en pêche. Il produira cette année près de 4000 livres pour les pecheurs de Plaisance tant habitants que marchands. J'ai reçu l'ordre de Votre Grandeur pour faire payer ceux des îles St. Pierre dans une saison trop avancée, les navires étaient déjà partis et je n'en ai pu tirer aucune rétribution; ce sera une augmentation de bien pour l'année prochaine. Quant au spirituel l'aumônier du fort y emploie tout son zèle, j'y ferai bâtir dans la suite une chapelle et l'on y pourra célébrer la Sainte Messe et y administrer les Sacrements. Nous n'avons encore pu faire aucune épargne et nous aurons de la peine à pouvoir payer toutes les dettes cette présente année, il y a eu nombre de malades par la quantité de prises et d'autres vaisseaux qui sont venus dans ce port sans y comprendre notre garnison où nous avons quelques invalides.

.....

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**B.24**

AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 6, 205, 206.

Etat des dépenses que le roi veut et ordonne être faites... à Plaisance... pendant la présente année 1708.

.....  
A l'aumônier..... 300#

.....  
A trois Récollets de la Province de  
Bretagne servant aud. Pays, pour aumône..... 150#

.....  
Pour les munitions et ustensiles qui  
seront achetés aud. port [de Rochefort] pour  
l'église et l'hôpital dud. Pays la somme de ..... 2630#  
Aux religieux récollets qui desservent  
audit pays, par gratification extraordinaire..... 200#  
.....

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#### **B.25**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-1, 4.  
Le Ministre au Pere Saturnin Dirop  
Ancien Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne a Morlaix  
A V<sup>lles</sup> le 11 Janvier 1708

...  
J'ay receu M.R.P. la Lettre que vous m'avez escrit le 28 du mois passé,  
lorsque je travailleray aux Affaires de Plaisance, je parleray au Roy du malheur  
arrivé au Récollets de l'Isle St. Pierre qui a pery, et je proposeray a sa M<sup>te</sup> de  
donner quelque chose a celui que vous avez envoyé a sa place.  
.....

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#### **B.26**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 29-5, 1144-1145  
A Mr. de Costebelle.  
A Versailles le 6 juin 1708.

.....  
J'approuve que vous ayez donné le direction de l'hospital au chirurgien  
major puisqu'il est fort propre pour cela. Si cependant il se trouvoit quelque  
habitant assez capable destre chargé de cette direction il me paroist que cela  
conviendrait mieux cependant je me remets a vous de faire sur cela ce que vous  
jugerez le plus a propos et je vous recommande d'avoir toujours beaucoup  
d'attention a ce que les malades de cet hospital soient bien traités et a ce qu'on  
administre les Sacremens fort exactement.

Je compte que le Superieur des Recolets de Quebec vous a envoyé le frere  
que vous luy avez demandé pour avoir soin des jardins et du logement de cet  
hospital et menager les consommations avec oeconomie.  
.....

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**B.27**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol 30-2, 223-224.

Le Ministre Au Pere Saturnin Dirop

Ancien Provincial des Recolets a Morlaix.

A Versaille le 9. Janvier 1709.

J'ay receu la Lettre que vous m'avez escrit le 28. Du mois passé, je vous remercie du compliment que vous me Faites sur la nouvelle année, je rendray compte au Roy de ce que vous m'escrivés sur vos Religieux de Plais<sup>te</sup> en l'Isle de Terre-neuve et je vous Feray scavoir les ordres que Sa Majesté donnera sur leur sujet.

A l'esgard de ce qui est deu a quelqu'un de vos Reli.<sup>x</sup> qui ont Servy d'aumosnier sur les Vaisseaux de sa Majesté; j'attends les eclaircissemens que j'ay demandé à Plaisance sur celui qui a servy sur le owest, et s'il luy est deu quelq. Chose il en sera payé aussitot.

A l'esgard de ceux que vous me marqués avoir servy sur les Vaisseaux l'hercule et l'arrogant, je ne scay ce que c'est, je doute mesme que cela regarde Sa Majesté, cepandant j'écris a M. Clairambault Ordonnateur de la Marine au Port Louis d'en faire la verifcation et de m'en informer vous pouvés vous entendre avec luy pour le mettre en etat de me donner cet esclarcissement.

.....

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**B.28**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-2, 222.

M. Clairambault.

A Versailles le 9 janvier 1709.

J'ay receu une Letter du Pere Saturnin Dirop provincial des Recolets de basse Bretagne, par laquelle, il demande le payement des appointmans deubs aux Aumosniers qu'il a fourny au Vaisseau l'hercule en 1704 et a l'Arrognat en 1705, comme ces Vaisseaux sont sortis du Port Louis qui est le seul ou ces Religieux en fournissent, je vous prie d'examiner ce qui peut leur estre deub et de me la faire scavoir, et si on a eu quelque raison pour se dispenser de les payer, afin que je puisse leur Faire rendre justice.

.....

---

**B.29**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-3, 728.

A M. de Costebelle.

A Marly le 10 aoust 1709.

.....

**Je suis persuadé que vous Ferez en sorte de vous passer du pere Recolet que vous aviez demandé a Quebec pour servir dans cet hospital, cependant s'il etoit absolument necess.re de l'y Faire envoyer, Sa Majesté en donneroit l'ordre c'est sur quoy j'attendray de vos nouvelles.**

.....

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**B.30**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 30-3, 756.**

**A M. de Costebelle.**

**A Marly le 10 aoust 1709.**

.....

**Le Provincial des Recolets de Bretagne me donne avis qu'il Fera passer deux Religieux de son ordre en Terre-neuve pour remplir les places qui vacquent a Plaisance et aux Isles St. Pierre, Sa Majesté leur a Fait donner cinquante Ecus a chacun, donnez leur toute la protection dont ils auront besoin pour remplir les fonctions de leur ministere, et Faites moi scavoir si on en sera content dans le pais, et si leur conduite sera telle que l'a doivent avoir des gens de leur profession.**

.....

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**B.31**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-3, 112.**

**A M. de St. Ovide.**

**A Versailles le 20 mars 1713.**

.....

**Il est necessaire que Vous laissiez a cet Etablissement l'aumonier qui Vous sera donné pour le V.au le Samslack sil n'y passe pas des peres Récollets de Plaisance ou de ceux de l'acadie Vous devez leur proposer en cas que Vous soyiez quils le puissent faire...**

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**B.32**

**AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-3, 184-185.**

**Le Pere Felix a Beaubassin.**

**A Versailles le 29 mars 1713.**

**Sa Majesté cedant l'acadie aux anglois et leurs abandonnant toute l'Isle de Terre Neuve par les Preliminaires de la paix a pris la resolution de faire Un Etablissement a l'Isle du Cap Breton pour y Establir Une pesche Sedentaire quoy quelle ayt reservé pour Ses sujets la faculté de pescher Sur Toutes les Costes de**

Terreneuve mais la difference quil y a d'une pesche fixe a Une de Tolerance ly a determiné Elle a pour cet effet Envoyé un V.au a cette Isle sous le Commandement du Sr. de St. Ovide Lieutenant de Roy de Plaisance qui a ordre d'y faire choix d'Un Port pour y placer le Nouvel Etablissement et dy Laisser deux detachemens des Troupes du Canada et de Plaisance qui y doivent hiverner sous le Commandement du Sr. Lhermitte Major de Plaisance, ces detachemens doivent preparer Tout pour recevoir l'année prochane La garnison et les habitans de Plaisance qui passeront avec M. de Costebelle qui Sera Gouverneur a cette Isle.

.....

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**B.33**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 35-2, 191-192.

Au Superior des Récollets en Canada.

A Versailles le 8 avril 1713.

Sa Ma.té ordonnant a M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil d'Envoyer Un detachement de 40 Soldats des troupes de la Nouvelle france a l'Isle du Cap Breton. Il est necessaire que Vous y envoyiés Un de vos peres pour y servir d'aumosnier avec un autre Missionnaire qui doit y hiverner. Je donne ordre a M. de Sty. Ovide en cas quil n'y passe pas Un pere Récollet de Plaisance ou de lacadie dy laisser L'aumonier du V.au quil commande qui est du mesme ordre Le luy marque aussy et au Sr. Lhermitte quils doivent obliger et par leur Conduite et par leurs discours tous ceux qui seront a cette Isle de Vivre de maniere a attirer les Benedictions du Ciel sur ce Nouvel Etablissement et davoir pour les Missionnaires qui y seront tout le Respect quils leur doivent. Je suis persuadé quils y Tiendront l'Un et lautre la main comme ils doivent, mais il faut aussy que les aumosniers se lattirent, Cest ce qui fait que je vuos prie de faire Un bon choix par Rapport a celuy que Vous enverrés Il est necessaire que Ce soit Un homme accomodant et dUn bon Esprit.

Signé.

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**B.34**

AN, COLONIES, Series B, vol. 35-1, 228-229.

Le Sr. de St. Ovide.

A Versailles le 10 avril 1713.

.....

Il est necessaire quil y ayt deux prestres qui hivernent a cet Etablissement, pour cela J'Ecris a M. de Costebelle de Voir Sil pouroit y faire passer des peres Récollets qui sont a plaisance et en mesme tems Jescris aussy a M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil d'en faire partir au autre de Quebec avec le detachement des troupes quil Vous enverra, par ce moyen Il y aura deux

aumosniers, mais si Vous n'en Emmeniés point de Plaisance, Il faut en ce cas que Vous laissiez L'aumonier de Samslack a cet Etablissement. J'ay Ecrit a M. de Beauharnois Sur ce sujet afin quil le dispose et quil luy fasse remettre les ornements et la chapelle qui luy sera necessaire.

Comme vous pouriés Engager quelqu Uns des Missionnaires qui Son a lacadie de Venir hiverner a cet Etablissement, je crois quil faut laisser les deux qui sont a plaisance afin que cette Colonie ne coure point le risque de Se trouver sans aumonier. Vous Verrés mieux a plaisance ce quil conviendra de faire Sur ce sujet avec M. de Costebelle parce que Vous pourés apprendre dans cet Endroit des Nouvelles de l'acadie qui Vous determineront Su le party que Vous devez prendre.

.....

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**B.35**

AN, Colonies, Series B, vol. 36-4, 250.

A M. l'Evesque de Bayonne.

Le 19 decembre 1714.

.....

Vous estes sans doute informé du nouvel Etablissement que le Roy fait a l'Isle Royale ou la garnison et les habitants de Plaisance ont esté transportés, on va établir dans cet endroit une pesche considerable de Morüe et comme il y a grabnd nombre de Basques qui y hiverneront tous les ans et qu'il n'y a d'autres prestres que des Récollets de la Province de Bretagne, il seroit tres important qu'il y en eut un qui sceut le Basque, Je Vous prie d'avoir agreable de vous faire informer S'il y en a quelqu'un dans le Couvent des Récollets de St. Jean de Lutz qui veüille aller resider a l'Isle Royale et vouloir bien me le faire scavoir.

.....

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**B.36**

AN, Colonies, Serie C11A, Vol. 123, f. 142r-143r.

28 novembre, 1715.

Isle Royale.

M. de Costebelle marque que les Recolets de ces deux Provinces sont paroître un zelle fort ediffiant pour la religion, mais que comme leur mission est divisée, la Province de Bretagne deservant la Cure des anciens habitants de l'Isle de Terreneuve et les Equipages et Vaisseaux pescheurs Il semble que la Province de Paris qui dessert les habitants de l'Acadie et la Chapelle du Roy auroit enuie de revoyer les Bretons en france et jouir de la mission generale de l'Isle. Il represente sur cela que ceux de la Province de Bretagne conviennent mieux aux habitants et Equipages que ceux de la Province de Paris auxquels il faut accorder l'Eloquence et le Don de persuader; mais on ne peut refuser aux



autres un zelle apostolique populaire et inimitable pour les courses assidues et fatiguants, qu'ils sont obligés de faire dans tous les Havres qui est un penible exercice et il y a de la justice de les conserver dans leur ancienne possession. fait et arrêté par le Conseil de Marine tenu au Louvre le 28 mars, 1716. L. et de Bourbon

Le marechal d'Estrées

Par le Conseil

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**B.37**

AN, Colonies, Serie C11A, vol. 123, f. 141r-142r

28 mars, 1716

Isle Royale

Conseil Eglise

Ily avoit a Plaisance des Recolets de la Province de Bretagne qui deservioient la Chapelle du Roy et la Cure des habitans de cet endroit et des Isles St. Pierre.

Quand M. de St. Ovide sui en 1713 avec un detachement de troupes de Plaisance pour faire le premier Etablissement sans cette Isle, il fut ecrit a Plaisance d'envoyer un Recolet si on pouvois avec ce detachement.

Et comme il y en avoit peu a Plaisance il fut ecrit en mesme temps en Canada d'en faire passer un avec le detachement des troupes qui alloient a cette Isle.

Celui du Canada arriva et il n'en Vini point de Plaisance.

Ce Recolet y a toujours resté depuis il en est mesme venu encore un du Canada avec le Second detachement de troupes et un frere Recolet. Ceux de Plaisance y sont arrivés avec le restant des troupes qui estoient dans cette place et les habitans, si bien qu'il se trouve a present dans cette Isle des Recolets de deux Provinces differentes, ceux de Canada etans de la province de Paris et ceux de Plaisance etans de la Province de Bretagne.

Les Curés des françois de l'Acadie sont aussi de la Province de Paris, et cest par cette raison qu'on a cru qu'il ne connesoit point de decider entre ces deux Provinces pour attribuer a une des deux les Cures de l'Isle Royale parce que comme l'intention a toujours été persuadé que pour y réussir il falloit se servir de ces Missionnaires et par consequens les laisser avec ces habitans qu'ils conduisent depuis longtems, il n'a pas paru juste aussi d'oter aux habitans de Plaisance et des Isles St. Pierre les Recolets de la Province de Bretagne dont ils s'accomodent fort.

Les Recolets de la Province de Paris ont esté autrefois seuls a Plaisance et aux Isles St. Pierre, mais comme ils ne fournissoient point de sujets pendant la guerre etans obligés d'en donner beaucoup pour les armées on fut obligé d'avoir recours aux Recolets de Bretagne, ces premiers laissant cette mission

**comme abandonnée, apresent que la Paix est faite, ceux de Paris voudroient avoir seuls de toute cette Isle.**

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**B.38**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol 3, 308.**

**L'Hermitte au Ministre.**

**A Plaisance, le 29 septembre 1702.**

.....

**Les maçons ont été employés depuis l'arrivée du vaisseau la Françoise à faire la poudrière, marquée sur le plan que j'envoiai l'année dernière à Votre Grandeur de F, qui est parfaite et à reêtir de maçonnerie l'église : je les emploierai le reste du temps que l'on pourra travailler à préparer des matériaux pour l'année prochaine, mais il nous manque des voitures pour leur transport; une seule gabarre ne peut pas suffire pour charroyer le bois et la pierre.**

.....

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**B.39**

**AN, Colonies, Series C11C, vol. 3, 327.**

**Durand la Garenne au ministre.**

**A Plaisance, le 10 octobre, 1702.**

.....

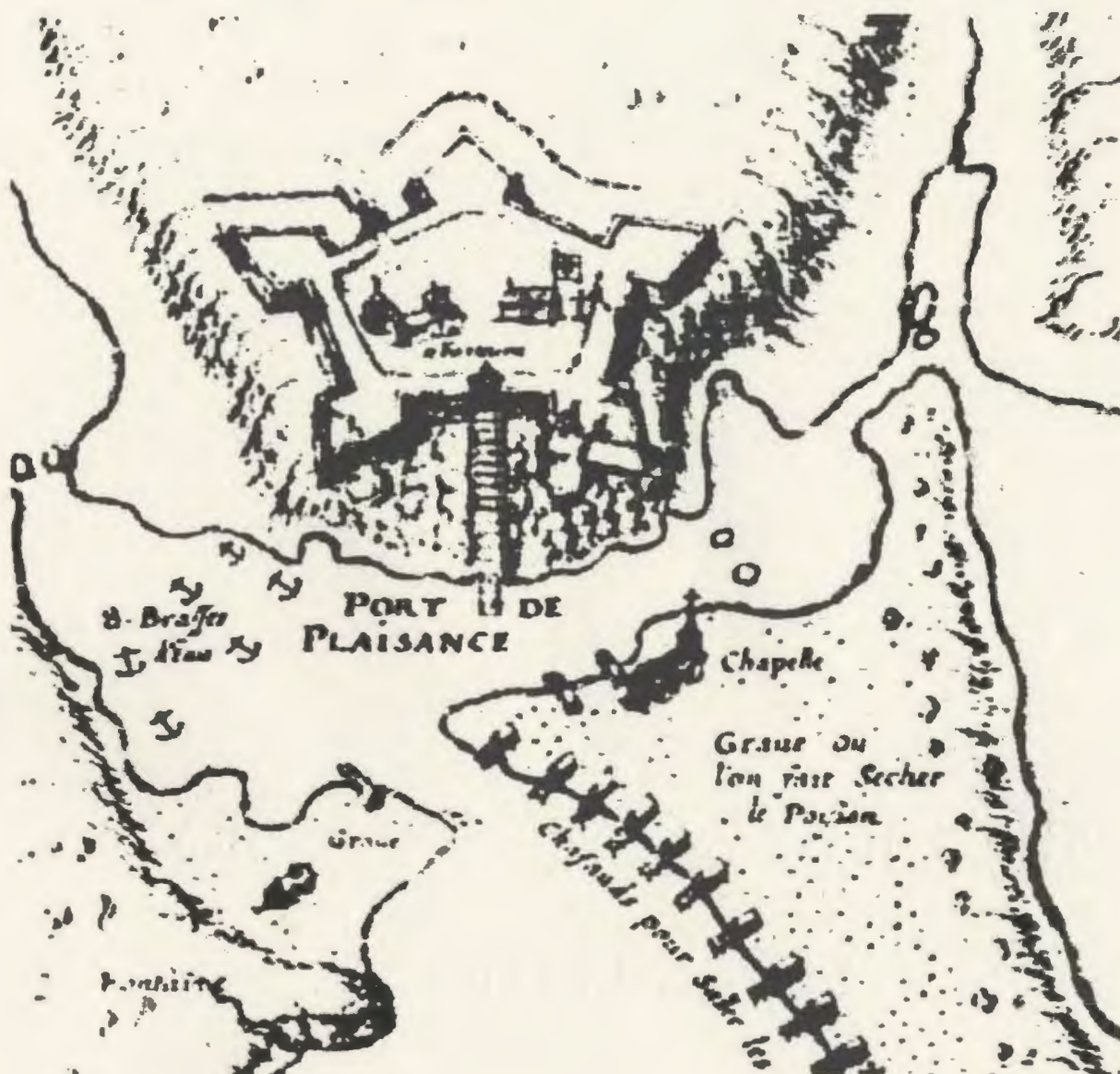
**Les charpentiers ont... rescié des planches pour couvrir l'eglise et les 2 chapelles qui sont aussi couvertes de bordeaux et sont à présent à l'abri de toute injure des temps, lesd. Chapentiers travaillent actuellement au logement de l'aumônier, l'église et les chapelles sont revêtues de maçonnerie.**

.....

**Appendix C**  
**Illustrations**

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>Figure 1</b> | <b>“Plan de la Rade Et du Port de Plaisance en l’Isle de Terre Neufe”</b>   |
| <b>Figure 2</b> | <b>Detail of Figure 1.</b>  |
| <b>Figure 3</b> | <b>“Plane de Lanclos de plaisance en terre neuve”</b>   |
| <b>Figure 4</b> | <b>Diagram of properties on the Grand Grave of Plaisance</b>  |
| <b>Figure 5</b> | <b>Location of property purchased by de Costabelle for the Recollets from Jougla</b>                              |
| <b>Figure 6</b> | <b>“Le Plan du Port de P.”</b>  |
| <b>Figure 7</b> | <b>Detail of Figure 6.</b>  |
| <b>Figure 8</b> | <b>“A Plan of the Settlement and Fishing Rooms belonging to the French Inhabitants of the Beach at Placentia”</b> |
| <b>Figure 9</b> | <b>Detail of Figure 8.</b>  |





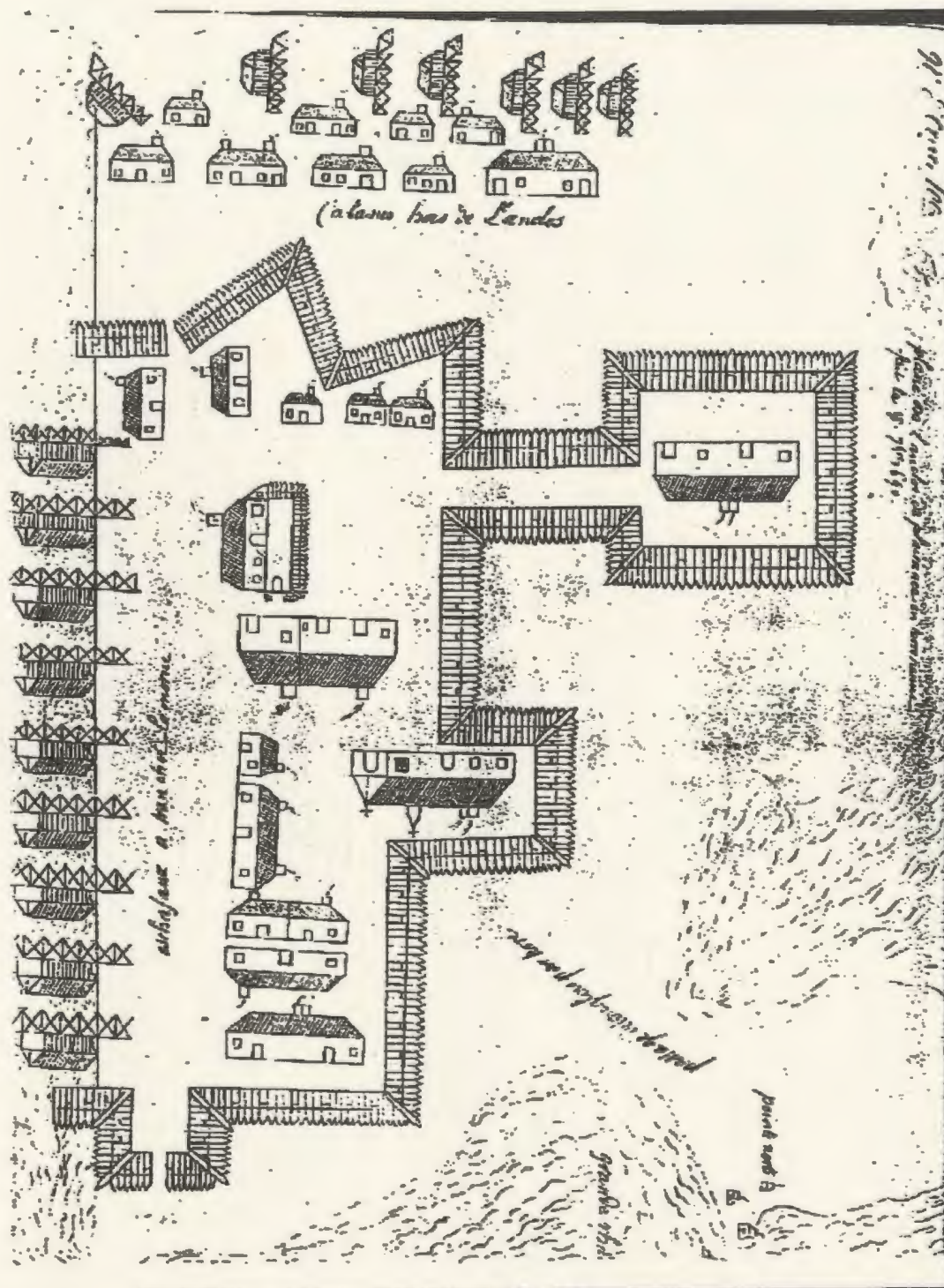
Appendix C, Figure 2

Detail of "Plan de la Rade Et du Port de Plaisance En l'Isle de Terre Neufve"

This detail shows the church in the foreground and a cross within the Old Fort.

*Public Archives of Canada.*



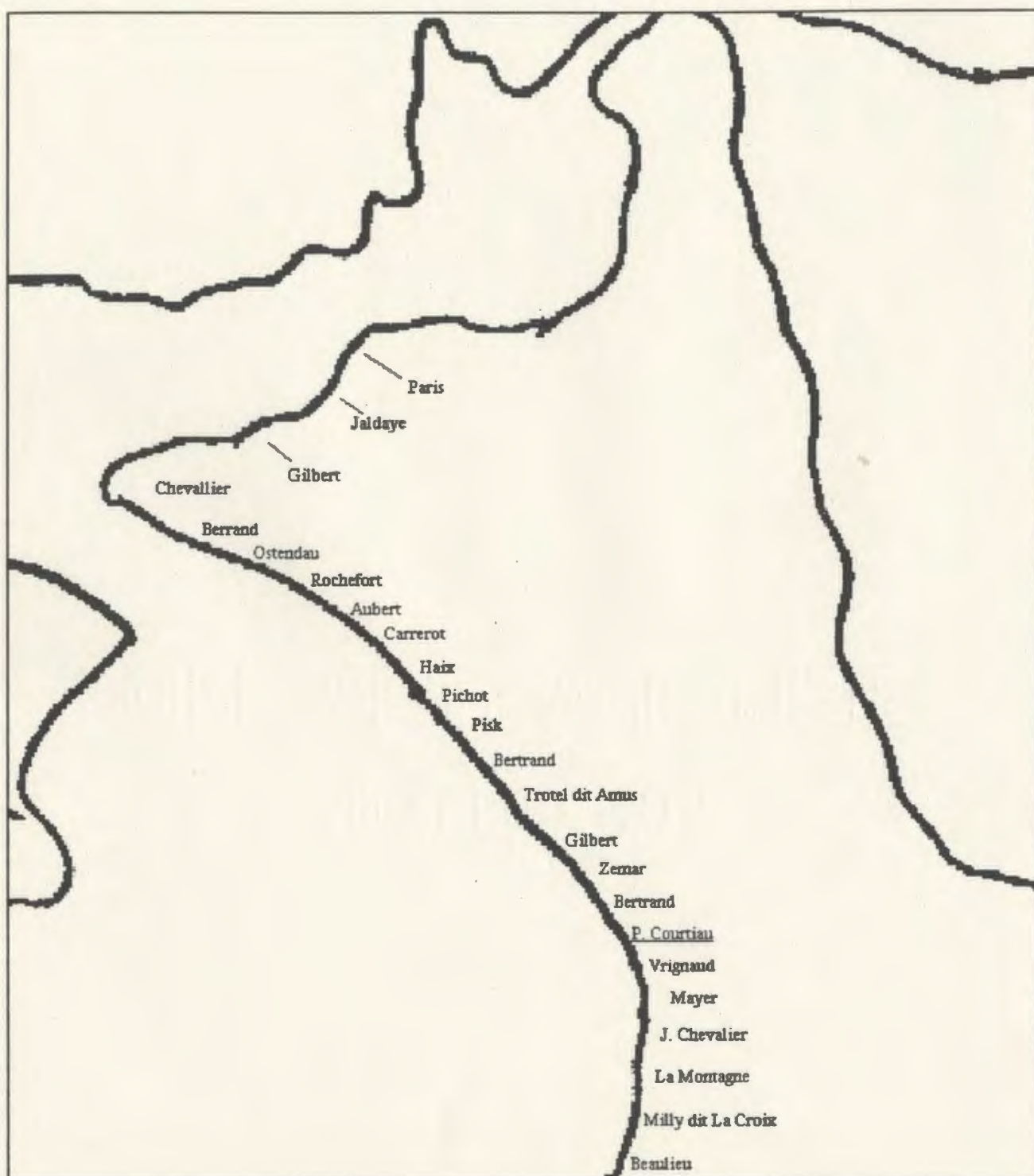


### Appendix C, Figure 3.

"Plane de Lanclos de plaisance en terre neuve fait le 15 7bre 1690"

This plan, drawn by de Costabelle, illustrates the temporary fort structure built by the inhabitants in 1690 after the English raid of that same year. The church in this figure is probably the one in which the inhabitants were incarcerated for six weeks.

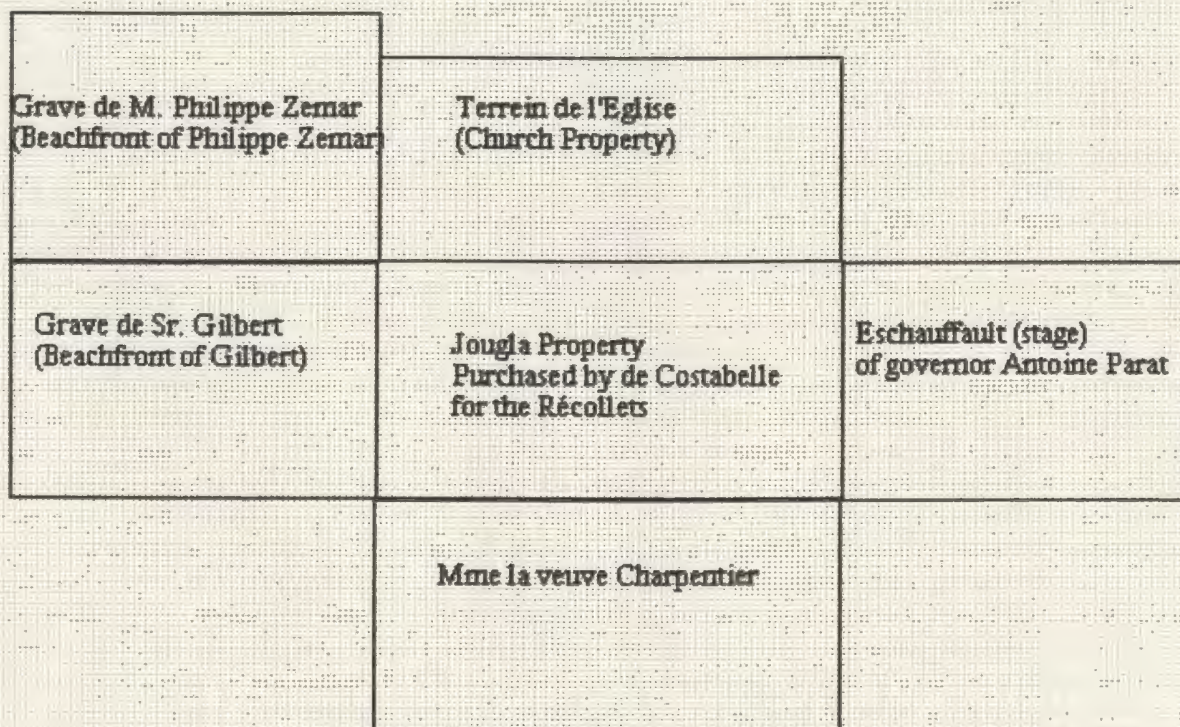
*Public Archives of Canada*



Appendix C, Figure 4.

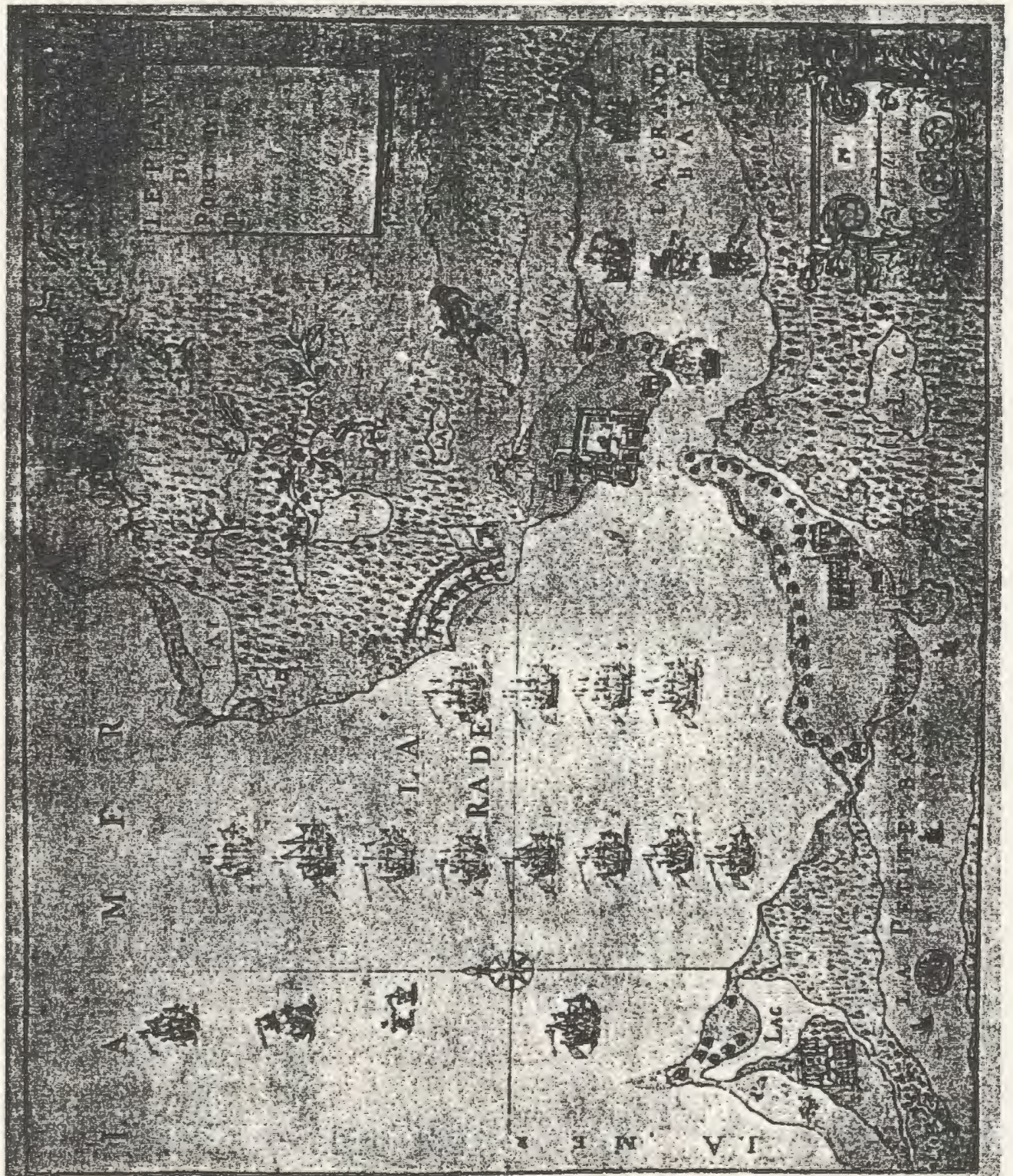
Diagram of the properties on the Grand Grave in Plaisance reconstructed from the 1698 census. The location of the property of Pierre Courtiau is underlined.





**Appendix C, Figure 5.**  
**Reconstruction of the location of the first Récollet property**  
**from the 1689 contract of sale.**





Appendix C, Figure 6.  
 "Le Plan du Port de P. [Plaisance]."  
*Public Archives of Canada.*





Appendix C, Figure 7.

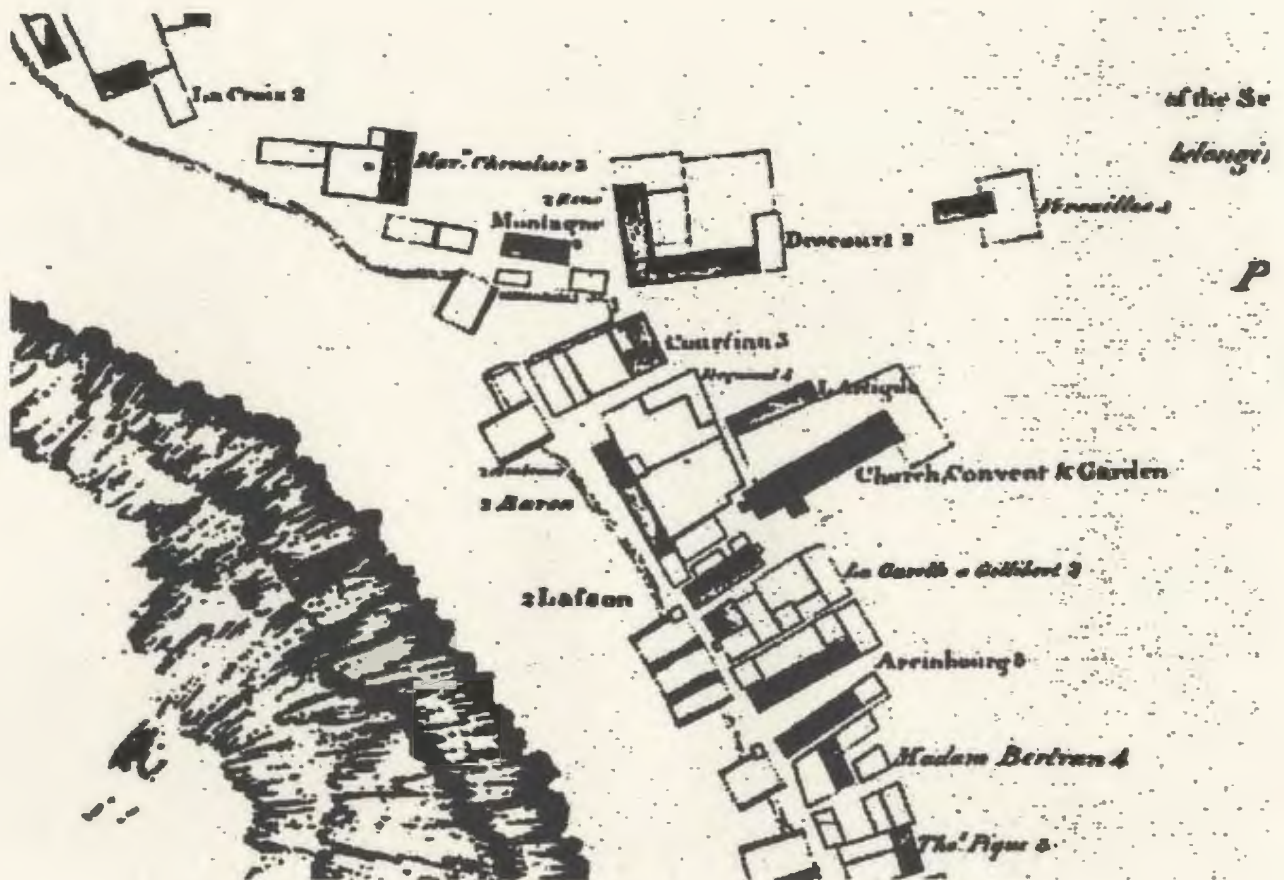
Detail of "Le Plan du Port de P. [Plaisance]."

Dating to 1708, this figure clearly shows the church on the beach. The cemetery lies to the left of the church and is drawn as a box containing several tombstones. The fortification on the hill is Fort Royal.

*Public Archives of Canada.*







Appendix C, Figure 9.

Detail of "A Plan of the Settlement and Fishing Rooms belonging to the French Inhabitants of the Beach at Placentia"

This figure shows the convent, church and garden.

*Public Archives of Canada.*

**Appendix D**  
**The Events of 1628**

**The first documentary evidence of the presence of Récollets in Plaisance appears in a report of 1628, in which two Récollets by the names of Daniel Boursier and François Girard de Binville were among a captured crew sailing from France to Quebec. In the spring of 1628, the Company of the Hundred Associates outfitted four ships with colonists and supplies for New France. Among the passengers were the afore-mentioned Récollets and two Jesuit priests. They travelled by way of Anticosti, Percée and the Gaspé only to find that the English were ahead of them and heading for Quebec. The head of the expedition, Claude de Roquemont, went on ahead to warn Champlain. By the time he arrived, Champlain had already hammered the English, forcing them to retreat back down the St. Lawrence, whereupon they came face-to-face with the French vessels. A battle ensued, which the English won. Roquemont was forced to concede, and did so under several conditions, including safe conduct for the Jesuits and Récollets. The French, under guard by the English, set out for Saint-Pierre and Miquelon where four captured Basque ships waited. Having plundered the French vessels, the English ships were overloaded with booty. Thirty of the French, along with the Récollets, were moved onto one of the Basque ships. After the English left with their plunder, the Basques reclaimed their ship and all its occupants, many of whom they allowed to row to Plaisance**

in a *chaloupe*. The two Récollets were retained by the Basques. After five weeks during which the basque ship was repaired, the ship set sail for Spain.<sup>556</sup>

It is unknown as to whether or not the Récollets actually set foot in Plaisance during the five weeks of ship repairs. The fate of the passengers who were allowed passage to Plaisance is also unknown. It can be presumed that it being the early summer, they met up with fishermen and either stayed in Plaisance or arranged transport. Regardless of the specifics of these two details, there remain two points of this story worthy of some elaboration. Firstly, one of the significant terms of concession as put forth by the French was that the religious go unharmed. The importance of the Récollets and Jesuits was recognized by the captain of the vessel. Secondly, the religious undoubtedly had frequent, if not constant, contact with the other passengers, including those allowed to leave for Plaisance. Their influence was felt during the voyage, when they reputedly set up a cross and engaged in prayer with the passengers at Percée.<sup>557</sup> It is worthy of mention that while Girard was from the Province of St.-Denis,<sup>558</sup> Boursier may have been the only Récollet from the Province of Lorraine to be associated with Plaisance.

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<sup>556</sup> Odoric-Marie Jouve, *Les Franciscains et le Canada*, vol. I - *L'établissement de la foi, 1615-1629*, (Quebec, 1915) 449-458.

<sup>557</sup> Jouve, "Père Daniel Boursier," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 49.

<sup>558</sup> *Mortuologue*, le 22 avril.

**Appendix E**  
**Jean-Capistran Chevrau: The Only Franciscan Born in Plaisance**

Jean Chevrau of Plaisance was the only member of the Plaisance community recorded as having entered religious orders. He was admitted to the Franciscan Récollets, specifically the Province of Saint-Denis, sometime in 1692 or 1693.<sup>559</sup> No birth date is documented for this man, but the year 1675 was postulated by Odoric Jouve through the knowledge of the date of ordination, July of 1699, at which time Chevrau must have been at least twenty-three.<sup>560</sup> At his ordination, Chevrau assumed the additional name of Capistran, altering his full name to Jean-Capistran Chevrau. His patron, St. John Capistran, was born the son of a Frenchman and became a fourteenth-century Franciscan preacher and reformer. He was beatified in 1694 and canonised in 1724.<sup>561</sup> In the time of Jean Chevrau of Plaisance, the Blessed John Capistran was not yet canonised. It was perhaps the novelty of his beatification which contributed to the selection of his affiliation for Chevrau.

The first census record from Plaisance in which a Chevrau appeared was the 1671 *Recensement nominatif*, in which a Jean Chevrau was listed among the male inhabitants. There were separate listings for children from birth to three

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<sup>559</sup> Jouve, "Pere Jean-Capistran Chevrau," in Jouve, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 111.

<sup>560</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>561</sup> J. Cambell, "John Capistran, St.," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 7 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book, 1967), 1039-1040.

years and from four years to eight years. Women were also listed separately, with their husbands indicated. In 1671, an Ozanne Chevrau was listed among the women as married to Philippe Zesmard. Whether Jean Chevreau was indeed the Jean-Capistran Chevreau in question, or whether the 1671 Jean Chevreau was perhaps the father of Jean-Capistran remains unknown. It is obvious that Jean Chevreau of Plaisance was above the age of eight years, or he would have been listed with the children. It is also evident that he was either unmarried or that his wife was not in Plaisance, as she would have been indicated in the list of female inhabitants. Further, a note at the bottom of the census states that, "Les autres habitans que nous avons à la coste ne sont pas fixes et le Roy ne leur donne rien ainsy je n'en fais pas mention."<sup>562</sup> Jean Chevreau was therefore in some way established enough to bear mentioning in a census, indicating that he was not one of the seasonal labourers, but rather stood apart as one of the citizens.

Two years later, in 1673, another census indicated the presence of a Jean Chevreau, aged 23 years, listed among the male *habitans*. The governor, Sr. de la Poippe, conducted this census on the eighth of September, 1673. Listed above Chevreau was one "Anthoine Royau dit le suisse domestique," with the heading of "Domestique du Sr. de la Poeppe" just above.<sup>563</sup> It is difficult to know whether

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<sup>562</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 1. Rolle des gens de l'habitation de Plaisance, 1671.

<sup>563</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 2, 1673. Rolle des noms et des surnoms aages des habitants de Plaisance que j'ay donné soubz le commandement de Mr. de la Poeppe Gouverneur le huit Sept.<sup>bre</sup>, 1673.



this heading applied also to Jean Chevrâu, but as the term "*domestique*" is singular, it appears that Anthoine Royau was the sole person indicated. It is also likely that, given the short period of time elapsed, the Jean Chevrâu of 1671 and that of 1673 are one and the same.

In 1673, Ozanni Chevrâu was still married to Philippe Zesmard, and in the list of unmarried girls, two bearing the surname Zesmard were recorded; Magdelaine and Honorée. A boy named Gaspard Zesmard was also mentioned among the lads of fewer than ten years. Jean Chevrâu was not listed as having a wife in Plaisance or elsewhere, nor were there any children bearing the surname Chevrâu.<sup>364</sup>

Chevrâu vanished at this point, not being mentioned in any of the subsequent censuses. The census of 1698 contained no mention of him.<sup>365</sup> Given the correspondence in names and given his apparent lack of wife or children, it is possible that the Jean Chevrâu mentioned in the 1671 and 1673 censuses was to become Jean-Capistran Chevrâu. The lack of a Jean Chevrâu in the 1698 census fits neatly with him being Jean-Capistran, especially given the fact that Jean-Capistran was in France studying for his impending ordination. In this case, the date of birth postulated by Jouve must be adjusted by some twenty-five years. The Jean Chevrâu mentioned in the Plaisance censuses was

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<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> AN, Colonies, Series G1, vol. 467, numéro 12. Recensement général des habitants de Plaisance en l'île de Terre-Neuve, 1698.

twenty-three in 1673. If this is indeed the same man, he was ordained at the age of forty-nine.

Ozanni Chevrau doubtlessly had some affinity to him, and was possibly his sister, although the precise nature of their relationship is unknown. She married Philippe Zesmard and they had several children.

In 1698, a Philippe Zemar was mentioned as being eighty years old and having been married to Marie Anne Chevrau for thirty years. Ozanni and Marie Anne were likely the same person, as are Philippe Zesmard and Philippe Zemar. In this census, we are told that Philippe Zemar was a native of England and that he has one son who never married. The entry reads as follows:

**Philippe Zemar: natif d'Angleterre aagé de 80 ans  
marieé icy depuis trente ans à Marie Anne Chevrau, a  
un fils de 25 ans point marié, n'a point de bestiaux, a  
trois fusils.**

**A une maison et de la grave pour trois chaloupes  
contenant soixante cinq toises de profondeur et neuf  
toises et demye de largeur, joignant du coté du Suest  
Ambroise Bertrand et du coté du Norouest Pierre  
Gilbert et de l'Est la rivière Dascau par brevet du 15  
mars 1696. Est à son aise.<sup>566</sup>**

Also in the 1698 census is the following passage under the heading of Pierre Courtiau:

**Pierre Courtiau: natif de Bayonne aagé de 26 ans  
marié depuis cinq ans icy a catherine Chevrau a deux  
garçons et une fille, a deux fusils, point de bestiaux.**

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<sup>566</sup> *Ibid.*

A une maison et ses dépendances et un jardin de seize toises de longueur et de sept de large, et une grave de 17 toises et demye de largeur et 75 de profondeur pour six chaloupes, joignant du côté du Sud Est François Vrignaud et du côté du Nord-Ouest Ambroise Bertrand par brevet du Roy 15 mars 1696.<sup>567</sup>

While the precise details of this transaction are addressed elsewhere in this thesis, it is important to note Zesnard's connections with both the Récollets and the Chevrâu family.

Jouve has postulated that Jean-Capistran was born sometime around 1675 and that Catherine Chevrâu may have been his sister.<sup>568</sup> Additional information regarding Jean-Capistran mentions that he was likely admitted to the Récollets of Saint-Denis in 1692 or 1693.

The one advantage that Jouve's chronology has over the theory offered above lies in the age Jean-Capistran Chevrâu must have had during some of his religious endeavours. In 1714, he accompanied the inhabitants of Plaisance to Ile Royale. Jouve's calculations would have him at about thirty-nine years of age during this trip, while viewing him as the Jean Chevrâu of the censuses indicates an age of sixty-four. Having died in 1733, Chevrâu could have been either fifty-eight or eighty-three, depending on the perspective taken.

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<sup>567</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>568</sup> Jouve, "Jean-Capistran Chevrâu," 111.

**A further postulation is that the Jean Chevr au in the 1671 and 1673 censuses was the father of Jean-Capistran. This could fit if Jean Chevr au married just after the census of 1673 and promptly had a son around 1675. He and his wife could have left Plaisance prior to the census of 1698, and therefore would not have been recorded.**

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