



*Gathering of the Levasseur Families in
Beupré, Quebec — August 19, 1957*

This document recounts the history and celebrations surrounding the great Levasseur family gathering held in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré in August 1957, marking the double tricentennial of the arrival of the first Levasseurs in New France and the founding of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne in 1657.

The initiative for this historic reunion was led primarily by Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., a Redemptorist priest, historian, and highly active organizer in the field of French-Canadian religious and genealogical heritage. Thanks to his efforts and to a committee composed of Levasseur descendants from various regions of Quebec, several thousand descendants from Canada and the United States were invited to take part in this first major North American family reunion.

The document recalls the origins of the Levasseur family in America through Jean and Pierre Levasseur, carpenters who came from Paris in the seventeenth century, and Laurent Levasseur somewhat later. Inspired by the Parisian Confraternity of Sainte Anne, they proposed to the Jesuits of Quebec the creation of a similar confraternity at Notre-Dame de Québec. Founded on May 1, 1657, this religious association played a major role in the spiritual life of the colony for more than two centuries.

The reproduced texts, taken from newspapers of the period, describe the religious ceremonies, the pontifical Mass celebrated by Georges Melançon, the special blessing from Pope Pius XII, as well as Father Levack's speeches on faith, family, and fidelity to French-Canadian traditions.

The gathering culminated in a banquet at the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, bringing together more than 300 guests around tables decorated with red roses. Participants celebrated not only their ancestors, but also the artistic, religious, and cultural legacy left by several generations of Levasseurs, including sculptors, craftsmen, and builders whose works can still be found in many churches throughout Quebec.

Finally, this document highlights the importance of family memory, genealogy, and the transmission of heritage in the history of French-Canadian families. It stands as a valuable testimony to one of the most significant family gatherings held in Quebec during the twentieth century.

The texts faithfully reproduce newspaper articles from the period. Although the optical character recognition (OCR) transcription has been reviewed, some residual errors may remain. Artificial intelligence tools were also used, under the supervision and validation of the authors, for traduction, to create evocative illustrations intended to enrich the reading experience.

Excerpts from these articles are drawn from the website of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ), which makes available to the public nearly all newspapers and magazines published in Quebec.

Father David Levack and the Legacy of French Canadian Families

Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., was a Redemptorist priest, historian, and highly active organizer in Quebec during the 1940s and 1950s. Closely associated with the sanctuary of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, he played an important role in promoting French-Canadian religious and family heritage. Passionate about the history of New France and its pioneer families, he was one of the principal organizers of the great Levasseur family gathering held in 1957 to mark the tricentennial of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne.

*Author of the book *La Confrérie de Sainte-Anne à Québec*, published in 1956, he helped bring wider recognition to the history of this confraternity founded in 1657 by Jean and Pierre Levasseur at Notre-Dame de Québec. As the official preacher of the tricentennial ceremonies, he emphasized the importance of faith, family, and devotion to Saint Anne in the history of French Canada.*

Father Levack also participated in several major family reunions during the 1950s, notably among the Levasseur, Lessard, and Bernier families, and served as the first parish priest of Escourt. His work remains an important reference today for the study of the origins of the Confraternity and of French-Canadian genealogical heritage.



The organizing committee of the 1957 gathering in Beauré

COMITE PROVISOIRE

EN VUE DE LA REUNION DES LEVASSEUR A SAINTE-ANNE DE BEAUPRE

LE DEUXIEME DIMANCHE D'AOUT 1957

<u>Régions</u>	<u>Noms</u>	<u>Adresses</u>	<u>Téléphone</u>
Lac St-Jean	1 M. Victorien Tremblay	Rue Collard	Alma, P.Q.
	2 Paul Levasseur, Maire	Hôtel de Ville	Alma, P.Q.
Matane	3 Yvon Levasseur	31, de la Fabrique	Matane, C.P.122
	4 Albert Levasseur	Gare C.N.R.	Mont-Joli, P.Q.
Rimouski	5 M. l'Abbé Adrien Tremblay	Ecole Technique	Rimouski, P.Q.
Québec	6 Benoît Levasseur	(Commission de l'Assistance Sociale) 80, St-Eustache Québec RMs: 889, Père Marquette, Québec	7-2412
	7 Lucien Levasseur	(Commission de l'Assistance Sociale) 80, St-Eustache Québec RMs: 177, Fraser Québec	
	8 Philippe Levasseur	(Commission de l'Assistance Sociale) 80, St-Eustache Québec RMs: 104, rue Chanoine Scott, Sainte-Foye, P.Q.	
	9 Charles Miville-Dechêne	Secrétaire du Ministre Barrette, Québec (Marié à une Levasseur)	
	10 Maurice Brunet	Traducteur au Parlement, Québec RMs: 25 - 6e Ave Est, Charlesbourg, P.Q.	
	11 Théo. Levasseur	Journaliste	St-Basile, Ctd Portneuf
	12 Dr Irma Levasseur	95, Artillerie	Québec
	13 R. l'Abbé Louis Levasseur	5871, Waverley Ecole St-Henri	Montréal (Le jour) RE 2512 (Le soir) CR 1241
	14 R.P. David Levack, c.s.s.r.	C.P. 500, Bureau de Poste Snowden	(Jour) HU 8-2561 Montréal 29(soir) DU 8-1161
	Cette liste comprend aussi les épouses des messieurs mariés.		
	15 J.-P.-H. Bégin	Instructeur du C.N.R. pour la région centrale 8, rue Desjardins	St-David de Lévis, P.Q.

L'ÉVÉNEMENT JOURNAL - QUEBEC - MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1956



Birthday of the Levasseur :

The large Levasseur family is actively preparing a reunion to celebrate, in 1957 at the shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, the tricentennial of the Confraternity of Saint Anne. Among the members of a large delegation gathered Saturday afternoon at the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac to prepare for this event were the following members of the organizing committee: from left to right, front row, Mr. Albert Levasseur of Mont-Joli; Rev. Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., of Montreal; Rev. Louis Levasseur of Montreal; second row, from left to right, His Worship Mayor Paul Levasseur of Alma; Mr. Benoit Levasseur of Quebec City; Mr. Lucien Levasseur of Quebec City; Mr. J.-P.-H. Begin of Saint-David-de-Lévis; Me Victorien Tremblay of Alma; and Mr. Julien Levasseur of Montreal.

L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE - QUEBEC - MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 1957

3e centenaire de la fondation de
la Confrérie de Ste Anne en 1957

Réunion des familles Levasseur à Ste-Anne

An impressive delegation of members of the Levasseur families, coming from several parts of the province, gathered Saturday at the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac to lay the groundwork for a reunion of all Levasseurs from Canada and the United States in August 1957 at the shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

This initiative, led by Rev. Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., and a committee representing the Levasseur families, aimed to prepare the program for celebrations that would bring together, for the first time in the country's history, this large family on the occasion of the tricentennial of the Confraternity of Saint Anne, founded in the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec by Jean and Pierre Levasseur, ancestors of the majority of Levasseurs in North America. The organizing committee invited all Levasseurs in Canada and the United States to submit their names and addresses as soon as possible by writing to Rev. Father D. Levack, C.Ss.R., P.O. Box 500, Snowdon Post Office, Montreal. Father Levack would then send families updated information regarding the celebrations and the reunion planned for 1957.

Jean Levasseur arrived in Canada with his family in 1651. He came from Paris where, as a carpenter, he had belonged—like his brother Pierre—to the Corporation of Paris Carpenters. The Levasseur brothers proposed to the Jesuit Fathers the establishment in Quebec, at Notre-Dame de Québec, of a Confraternity of Saint Anne modeled after the one in Paris. The Confraternity was founded on May 1, 1657. Jean Levasseur became its first dean and lay founder. For more than two centuries, this Confraternity was known as the Confraternity of the “Carpenters of Madame Saint Anne” and brought together all the adults of the colony during that period—men and women, young men and young women alike. In 1858, the Confraternity was transferred to the parish of Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Quebec City, where it still exists today under the name “Congregation of the Ladies of Saint Anne.”

The very numerous descendants of Jean and Pierre Levasseur are found today mainly in the regions around Quebec City, Rimouski, Trois-Rivières, and throughout the United States. Their number reaches several thousand. The Levasseurs also include three generations of talented sculptors and statuary artists, whose artistic works can be admired in several churches and at the Provincial Museum of Quebec.

Here is the list of descendants of Jean and Pierre Levasseur who composed the organizing committee for the celebrations: Mr. and Mrs. Albert Levasseur, Mont-Joli; His Worship Mayor Paul Levasseur and his wife, Me Victorien Tremblay and his wife, Alma; Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Brunet, Charlesbourg; Mr. and Mrs. J.-P.-H. Bégin, Saint-David-de-Lévis; Rev. Adrien Tremblay, Rimouski; Mr. and Mrs. Théodore Levasseur, Saint-Basile; Mr. and Mrs. Benoît Levasseur, Dr. Irma Levasseur, Mr. and Mrs. Lucien Levasseur, Mr. Philippe Levasseur, Quebec City; Rev. Louis Levasseur, Mr. and Mrs. Julien Levasseur, and Rev. Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., Montreal.

L'ACTION CATHOLIQUE - QUEBEC - LUNDI, 19 AOUT 1957



Representatives of the 4,000 members of the Levasseur families, coming from 41 Canadian French-speaking cities and 32 cities in the United States, celebrated on Sunday a double tricentennial: that of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, founded in Quebec City by the first two Levasseurs, Jean and Pierre, on May 1, 1657, as well as the 300th anniversary of the arrival of the Levasseurs in Canada. It was the first time in the country's history that such a gathering had taken place for the Levasseur families.

The Levasseur reunion began with a pilgrimage to Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, where Jean Levasseur obtained a land concession in 1655 and where his name appears at the head of the pilgrims' golden register. A pontifical Mass was celebrated by His Excellency Bishop Georges Melançon, Bishop of Chicoutimi. His Excellency conveyed to the Levasseur families the special blessing granted by His Holiness Pope Pius XII. In his sermon, the bishop expressed the wish to see "Saint Anne once again become the queen of all our parishes." Referring to the tricentennial of the arrival of the Levasseurs, founders of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, he stated in substance that the greatest hope was for this devotion to endure through the centuries in French Canada.

The commemorative sermon was delivered by Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., organizer of the gathering and author of the illustrated 200-page volume *The Confraternity of Sainte Anne in Quebec*. The preacher summarized the history of the Confraternity founded in Quebec by the Levasseur brothers, praised the Levasseur ancestors, and highlighted the double lesson of this double tricentennial: gratitude toward the ancestors who left their descendants such inspiring examples of faith, devotion to Sainte Anne, courage, and intelligence in daily work; and a lesson in Christian and family life.

After the pontifical Mass, the pilgrims gathered in the parish hall of Sainte Anne to sign the Levasseur golden register, which would remain in the sanctuary archives. The book was to be kept at the foot of the miraculous statue of Sainte Anne at the request of the Levasseur families and through the initiative of Mrs. Anne-Marie Levasseur, wife of Me Victorien Tremblay, K.C., of Alma. The basilica authorities accepted this request as a sign of recognition for the founding of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne by Jean and Pierre Levasseur.



That evening, the Levasseurs gathered at the Château Frontenac for a banquet beginning at eight o'clock. More than three hundred guests were seated around tables decorated with magnificent red roses. At the close of the banquet, several speakers addressed the audience. The masters of ceremonies were Me Victorien Tremblay, K.C., lawyer from Alma, Lac-Saint-Jean, and Mr. Albert Levasseur of Mont-Joli. The following guests gave brief addresses: Abbé Ovide Levasseur, chaplain of Saint-Joseph University Hospital in Trois-Rivières; Reverend Mother Marie de Bon Secours, secretary general of the Sisters of Sainte Anne in Lachine; Mr. Rolland Auger, secretary of the Montreal Genealogical Society; Mrs. Anna Morin Dubé of Salmon Falls, New Hampshire; Abbé Louis

Levasseur, chaplain of St-Henri School in Montreal; Mr. Paul Levasseur, mayor of Alma, Lac-Saint-Jean; Mr. Théo Levasseur, journalist from St-Basile de Portneuf; and Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., organizer of the gathering.

Historical Background

Jean Levasseur arrived in Canada in 1651 with his family. He came from Paris where, as a carpenter, he belonged, like his brother Pierre, to the Corporation of Carpenters. Pierre later joined his brother Jean in Quebec City a few years afterward.

Wishing to imitate in New France the confraternities established by their fellow craftsmen in Paris, the Levasseur brothers proposed to the Jesuit Fathers serving the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec that they establish a Confraternity of Sainte Anne modeled after the one in Paris. The confraternity was founded on May 1, 1657. Jean Levasseur became its first dean and lay founder. For more than two centuries, this confraternity was known as the “Confraternity of the Carpenters of Madame Sainte Anne” and brought together adults throughout the colony — men and women, young men and young women alike. In 1858, the confraternity was transferred from the parish of Notre-Dame to Saint-Jean-Baptiste parish in Quebec City, where it still exists today under the name “Congregation of the Ladies of Sainte Anne.”

The numerous descendants of Jean and Pierre Levasseur are now found mainly around Quebec City, Rimouski, Trois-Rivières, and throughout the United States from Maine to California. The Levasseur family also produced three generations of talented sculptors and statuary artists whose works may still be admired in many churches and at the Provincial Museum of Quebec.

The Banquet

No head table was arranged in order to symbolize that all Levasseurs shared equally in the tributes paid to their ancestors.

Mr. Albert Levasseur, chief agent of the Canadian National Railway in Mont-Joli, read a letter from a member of the Levasseur family living in Oregon. The author commented on the devotion and dedication demonstrated by Levasseur families in both Canada and the United States. Mr. Paul Levasseur, who wrote the preface to the book on the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, thanked all the organizers of the Levasseur tricentennial celebration. It was also noted that the Levasseurs possess their own coat of arms. In this regard, Mr. Théo Levasseur, journalist from St-Basile de Portneuf, stated during his address that he personally held an exclusive version of these arms. The motto of the coat of arms, he explained, is “Du mieux que je puis” — “The Best That I Can,” a personal adaptation of the old French saying: “One must do the best one can.”



Father Levack

The preacher drew several lessons from the Levasseur gathering.

A Lesson of Gratitude

“His Holiness is pleased to see in the growth of the Levasseur family a sign of heavenly favor, and He hopes that its beneficiaries will know how to offer God the thanksgiving fitting for the solemnity of a common ceremony.”

This common ceremony was above all the pilgrimage bringing representatives of the Levasseur families from every corner of Canada

and the United States to the feet of Good Sainte Anne. “May our thanksgiving rise to Heaven through the hands of Good Sainte Anne, who for the past three hundred years has been the benevolent protector of the Levasseur families descended from Jean and Pierre Levasseur.”

He urged thanks first and foremost for the three centuries of fidelity that had characterized the descendants of the Levasseurs and continued to do so, as demonstrated by the present celebrations. Fidelity to God and to His Church above all. Hundreds of priests and religious formed a glorious crown around the Levasseur name in the country, bearing witness to the religious vitality of successive generations. Fidelity to family traditions that earned the ancestors the highest praise from religious leaders. Fidelity to the spirit of work. In keeping with the Levasseur motto, “Du mieux que je puis” (“The Best That I Can”), several generations of Levasseur artisans, sculptors, and architects left monuments worthy of admiration throughout the province.

A Lesson in Christian and Family Life

In his august message, the Sovereign Pontiff spoke appropriately of “the humble efforts of daily Christian life.” It was especially through this that the ancestors being remembered had served the generations that followed them in Canada and the United States.

“One of the great wonders of the Church in the 17th and 18th centuries,” wrote the historian of Bishop Taché, “was the French Canadian family.”

The ceremony recalled those deeply Christian families of former times: families in which fathers and mothers set the example of every domestic virtue and, in the words of Bishop de Saint-Vallier, “made up for the shortage of priests”; families in which children continued to recognize parental

authority well into adulthood; families that placed all their trust in Good Sainte Anne, invoking her name in every event of family life, especially at the birth and upbringing of children. A remarkable fact for anyone studying Levasseur genealogy is the large number of daughters entrusted to the protection of Sainte Anne by being given her name.

“May the Levasseur families of today and tomorrow always prove worthy of the Levasseur families of the past” — this was the wish expressed in the name of all on that festive day, and likewise the object of their prayer to Good Sainte Anne during the Levasseur pilgrimage to Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.



L'ÉVÉNEMENT JOURNAL - QUEBEC - MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 1957

Le troisième centenaire de la Confrérie de Ste-Anne célébré par les familles Levasseur



MM. Paul Levasseur; J.-V. Tremblay; le R.P. D. Levack

The Levasseur families celebrated two important anniversaries on Sunday: the tricentennial of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne and the tricentennial of the arrival of the first Levasseurs in Canada.

More than 4,000 members of these families, scattered across 41 French-Canadian cities and 32 American cities stretching from the Canadian border to Florida, gathered at the feet of Good Sainte Anne on the occasion of these two

anniversaries. It was the first gathering of its kind for the Levasseur families.

The program for the celebration included, in the morning, a gathering at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, a pontifical Mass celebrated by His Excellency Bishop Georges Melançon, Bishop of Chicoutimi, and the signing of the Levasseur families' golden register. In the evening, a grand banquet brought together more than 300 guests at the Château Frontenac.

The Levasseur families currently number approximately 4,000 members spread throughout Canada and the United States. The first Levasseur, Jean, arrived in the country in 1651. He was a carpenter from Paris. A few years later, he was joined by his brother Pierre, who was also a carpenter. Both had belonged to the Paris Corporation of Carpenters and to the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, which complemented the carpenters' guild. It was they who proposed to the Jesuit Fathers serving the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec that a Confraternity of Sainte Anne be founded following the Paris model. This foundation took place on May 1, 1657.

In his address during the pontifical Mass celebrated for the Levasseur families gathered at the sanctuary of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Bishop Georges Melançon said he was pleased to officiate at the Mass: "because," he explained, "this opportunity allows me to repeat a wish I have already

expressed. In French Canada, devotion to Sainte Anne must not die. This morning, the large presence of the Levasseur families gives us the assurance that this devotion will endure.”

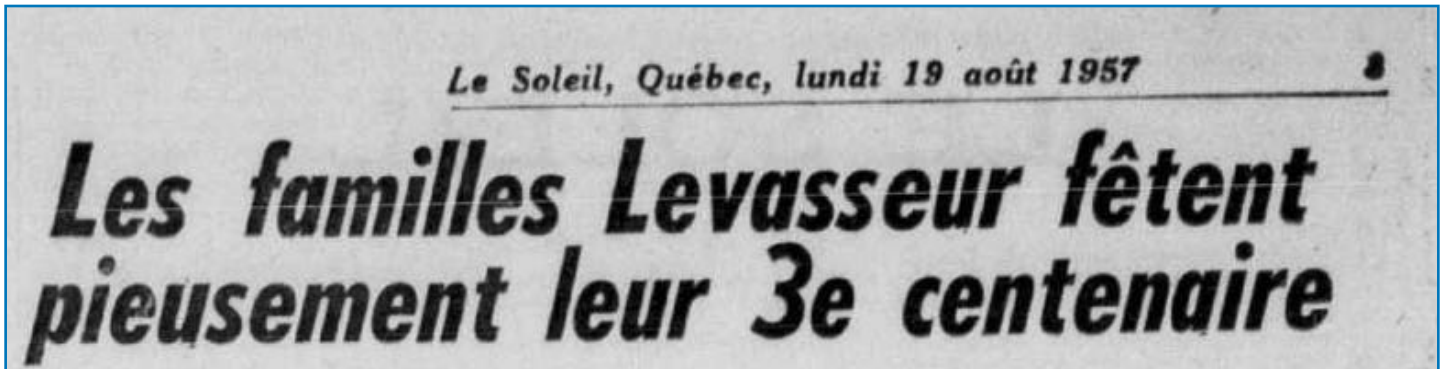
The sermon was delivered by Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., organizer of the gathering. The preacher summarized the history of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne founded in Quebec by the Levasseur brothers, praised the Levasseur ancestors, and emphasized the double lesson emerging from this double tricentennial: a lesson of gratitude toward the ancestors, and a lesson in Christian and family life.

Following the pontifical Mass, the Levasseur pilgrims gathered in the parish hall of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré to sign the Levasseur golden register, which will remain in the sanctuary archives.

It may be worth mentioning that this golden register will be kept at the foot of the miraculous statue, at the request of the family. The initiator of this gesture was Mrs. Anne-Marie Levasseur, wife of Me Victorien Tremblay, K.C. The pilgrimage authorities readily accepted this request because of the important role played by Jean and Pierre Levasseur in the founding of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne in 1657.

That evening, the Levasseurs gathered at the Château Frontenac for the banquet, which began at eight o'clock. More than three hundred guests took their places around tables decorated with magnificent red roses.



LE SOLEIL - MONDAY - AUGUST 19, 1957

Hundreds of representatives of the Levasseur families, scattered throughout North America, gathered yesterday in Quebec City and the surrounding region to celebrate the tricentennial of their ancestors' arrival in Canada, as well as the tricentennial of the Canadian Confraternity of Sainte Anne, founded in 1657 at the request of the brothers Jean and Pierre Levasseur.

The day was marked by the celebration of a pontifical Mass at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré and by a banquet held that evening at the Château Frontenac.

A Devout Family

Jean Levasseur, a carpenter in Paris, came to settle in New France in 1651. Governor Lauzon granted him a land concession at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré in 1655, and his name appears at the head of the golden register in which so many illustrious pilgrims would later sign. Two years later, with the agreement of his brother Pierre, who had joined him in Quebec City, he submitted a request to the Jesuits serving the parish of Notre-Dame asking for the establishment of a "Confraternity of the Carpenters of Madame Sainte Anne." This confraternity was indeed founded by Father Dequen, discoverer of Lake Saint-Jean, and it bore that name until 1858.

Under the protection of Sainte Anne, the Levasseur families spread throughout the new continent; their members now number approximately 4,000, mainly distributed among 41 Canadian cities and 32 American cities, from Gaspé to California.

Brilliant Celebrations

The pontifical Mass was celebrated yesterday morning by Bishop Georges Melançon, Bishop of Chicoutimi, who expressed the hope that devotion to Sainte Anne would continue throughout French Canada. The sermon was delivered by Father David Levack, C.Ss.R., organizer of the religious portion of the celebration.

After recounting the history of the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, the preacher praised the Levasseur ancestors as models of religious vitality and of the spirit of work carried out “the best that I can,” according to their motto — a spirit that endured among their descendants and enabled several generations of Levasseur craftsmen, sculptors, and architects to create so many artistic monuments that our province proudly cherishes.

Following this tribute, the celebrant, Bishop Melançon, bestowed upon the Levasseur families the special blessing granted to them by His Holiness Pope Pius XII.

The Levasseur pilgrims then proceeded to the parish hall of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré to sign the golden register first opened by their ancestor Jean three centuries earlier. This golden register will henceforth be preserved at the foot of the miraculous statue, at the request of Mrs. Anne-Marie Levasseur, wife of Me Victorien Tremblay, K.C.



That evening, more than 300 guests took their seats around tables adorned with magnificent red roses at the Château Frontenac. There was no special head table, as the celebration honored all Levasseur descendants equally.

Among the speakers were Mr. Paul Levasseur, mayor of Alma and author of a preface on the Confraternity of Sainte Anne, who paid tribute to the organizers; Mr. Albert Levasseur of Mont-Joli, who spoke about the Levasseur families spread across both Canada and the United States; and Father Levack, C.Ss.R., who reflected upon the lessons of this remarkable day.

TERCENTENARY ADDRESS OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF SAINT ANNE

David Levack, C.Ss.R.

Grand Gathering of the Levasseur Family — August 18, 1957

National Shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré

Note: The original texts by Father David Levack were written in French. This translation was prepared to the best of our understanding.

Motto of the Levasseur Family: “Du mieux que je puis” (As best I can)

It is fitting, I believe, to begin this timely address by reading the message that Pope Pius XII kindly sent to the Levasseur family through the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, His Excellency Most Reverend Giovanni Panico.

Message from His Holiness Pope Pius XII

“Three hundred years ago, Jean and Pierre Levasseur founded the Confraternity of Saint Anne in Quebec City in a profound act of faith. On the occasion of this anniversary, the numerous descendants of the two brothers have the pious intention of gathering on August 18 at the National Shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

Traditionally bound to the Sovereign Pontiff by filial piety and gratitude for a Papal Bull of Indulgence granted to the Confraternity in 1660, this vast family wished, on this occasion, to turn respectfully toward the common Father to implore his blessing.

His Holiness is pleased to see the growth of the Levasseur family as a sign of heavenly favor, and he desires that the beneficiaries express their gratitude to God through the solemnity of a shared ceremony as well as through the humble efforts of a Christian’s daily life. It is as a pledge of these graces of fidelity that the Holy Father whole-heartedly sends a special Apostolic Blessing to every member of the Levasseur family and to the ever-active Confraternity of Saint Anne.”

Before commenting on the august words of this pontifical message, I wish first of all, on behalf of all the Levasseurs, to cordially thank His Excellency Most Reverend Mélançon, Bishop of Chicoutimi.

Your presence here, Your Excellency, demonstrates once again your devotion to our local families and your deep veneration for Good Saint Anne. At the great rally for the Feast of Saint Anne in Chicoutimi this past July, you put forward a magnificent watchword that should serve as the guide for this tercentenary at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré:

“Saint Anne must once again become the queen of all our parishes.”

Queen of Canada, Saint Anne has been so since the very origins of our country. Nothing proves this better than the foundation, on May 1, 1657, of the Confraternity of Saint Anne in the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec, whose tercentenary we celebrate this year.

The Confraternity of Saint Anne in Quebec City

Through the diverse historical figures involved in the foundation and development of this Confraternity, one can tangibly observe the immense prestige that Good Saint Anne held over all classes of society from the very beginnings of the colony.

First, the Jesuit missionaries, notably Reverend Fathers Dequen—the discoverer of Lake Saint Jean—and Joseph Poncet, deployed extraordinary zeal in establishing and nurturing this Confraternity. Following its foundation, they secured the blessings and favors of the Apostolic Holy See, which, at their request, bestowed upon the new Confraternity a Papal Bull of Indulgence dated December 11, 1660, the oldest in the country.

We then see our bishops, one after another, looking after this humble Confraternity with paternal care, fully convinced that it served as a chosen instrument for the sanctification of their flock.

The following chronological table outlines the milestone pastoral interventions that shaped the history of the Confraternity:

Year / Date	Historical Event and Pastoral Role
1678	Bishop de Laval modifies the regulations of the Confraternity to adapt to new circumstances; these rules remained in force for more than two centuries.
May 15, 1694	Thanks to Bishop de Saint-Vallier, two new Papal Bulls were obtained from Rome in favor of the Confraternity of Saint Anne in Quebec City.
1778	Bishop Briand works to re-establish the Confraternity following the disruptions of the 1760 conquest, writing: 'You are the children and successors of saints.'
November 26, 1820	Bishop Plessis, responding to a formal petition from the carpenters of Quebec, restores the Confraternity to its ancient splendor.
1858	Bishop Baillargeon transfers the seat of the Confraternity from Notre-Dame Parish to Saint-Jean-Baptiste Parish, aligning with the demographic distribution of its members.

Furthermore, the pastors of Notre-Dame de Québec watched over the growth of the Confraternity with unmatched pastoral zeal, as evidenced by the ancient registers and sermon books of the parish spanning over two hundred years.

Finally, the role of the laity in this Confraternity clearly indicates that devotion to Saint Anne had penetrated the deepest corners of the French-Canadian soul. It was not only women, but men who led the movement: master carpenters in the foreground, alongside men of every socio-economic status who sought membership under the banner of Good Saint Anne.

The old registers contain the most illustrious names in the history of Quebec City. The entire French-Canadian family placed itself under the protection of Saint Anne from the dawn of the French colony in

America. Among the prominent laymen who spearheaded the foundation of the Confraternity, we are proud to proclaim today the names of the two pioneer brothers, Jean and Pierre Levasseur.

Jean and Pierre Levasseur

It is with a legitimate sense of pride that the descendants of the Levasseur lineage can read, at the bottom of the formal petition presented on May 1, 1657, requesting the establishment of the Confraternity, the names of Jean and Pierre Levasseur, carpenters established in Quebec.

The early settlers were builders; they came to erect a new society. These master carpenters arrived from Paris, France, where they had been part of the traditional guild of carpenters. They brought with them their advanced structural knowledge, but also, deep within their hearts, a profound piety.

Their devotion held a marked preference for Good Saint Anne, chosen from time immemorial as the patron saint of carpenters. It is precisely this spiritual dedication that has most enduringly transmitted their names to posterity. These two Levasseur brothers were modest artisans, and if we still speak of them with high praise three centuries later, it is specifically because of their cornerstone role in founding the Confraternity.

One historical fact makes the figure of Jean Levasseur particularly captivating: on January 30, 1655, he obtained from Governor Lauzon the concession of a vast and beautiful estate on the Beaupré Coast. He fully intended to settle his family there, but his official duties in Quebec City prevented him from executing this plan.

Nonetheless, he remained deeply attached to this land. His name and offering are recorded at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré alongside that of Father Morel, the worthy priest appointed by Bishop de Laval to organize the parish of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré. He even had the distinct honor of opening the Golden Book of Good Saint Anne, in which so many illustrious historical figures would subsequently sign.

Lessons to be Drawn from the Levasseur Gathering

1. A Lesson of Gratitude

This shared celebration is, above all, a pilgrimage that brings to the feet of Good Saint Anne representatives of the Levasseur families from all corners of Canada and the United States. Let us lift our thanksgiving to Heaven through the hands of Good Saint Anne, who has been the benevolent protector of the lineages stemming from Jean and Pierre Levasseur over the past three hundred years.

Let us thank Heaven above all for these three centuries of steadfastness that have characterized the descendants, as manifested so clearly by today's festivities:

- **Fidelity to God and His Church first.** Hundreds of priests and religious form a glorious crown around the Levasseur name in our country, testifying to the religious vitality of successive generations.
- **Fidelity to family traditions** which earned our ancestors the highest praise from our religious leaders.
- **Fidelity to the spirit of labor.** In accordance with the Levasseur motto, 'Du mieux que je puis', generations of Levasseur artisans, sculptors, and architects have left monuments of excellent craftsmanship throughout our province.

2. A Lesson of Christian and Family Life

In his august message, the Sovereign Pontiff accurately highlights the humble daily efforts of the Christian life. It is primarily through this daily devotion that the ancestors we honor today have served succeeding generations across Canadian and American soil.

“One of the greatest marvels of the Church in the 17th and 18th centuries is the French-Canadian family,” wrote the historian of Bishop Taché.

Today's ceremony brings back the memory of those deeply Christian families of yesteryear: families where the father and mother set the example of all domestic virtues and, in the words of Bishop de Saint-Vallier, 'made up for the shortage of too few priests'; families where children respected parental authority well into adulthood; families that placed their complete trust in Good Saint Anne.

Her name was intertwined with every household event, particularly with the birth and education of children. A remarkable fact for anyone studying the Levasseur genealogy is the considerable number of daughters whom parents placed under the protection of Good Saint Anne by giving them her name.

Conclusion and Prayer

May the Levasseur families of today and tomorrow always prove worthy of the Levasseur families of old: this is the wish we form on this feast day, and it is the object of our prayer to Good Saint Anne during this pilgrimage to Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

In order that this wish may be fulfilled and this prayer answered, I ask His Excellency the Bishop of Chicoutimi to kindly bestow upon us all the Apostolic Blessing so paternally granted by the Sovereign Pontiff Pius XII.

*— Du mieux que je puis —
(As best I can)*