

Brebeuf's Instructions to the Missionaries

In 1637, Father Jean de Brebeuf drew up a list of instructions for Jesuit missionaries destined to work among the Wendat.

- You must love these Hurons, ransomed by the blood of the Son of God, as brothers.
- You must never keep the Indians waiting at the time of embarking.
- Carry a tinder-box or a piece of burning-glass, or both, to make fire for them during the day for smoking, and in the evening when it is necessary to camp; these little services win their hearts.
- Try to eat the little food they offer you, and eat all you can, for you may not eat again for hours.
- Eat as soon as day breaks, for Indians when on the road, eat only at the rising and the setting of the sun.
- Be prompt in embarking and disembarking and do not carry any water or sand into the canoe.
- Be the least troublesome to the Indians.
- Do not ask many questions; silence is golden.
- Bear with their imperfections, and you must try always to appear cheerful.
- Carry with you a half-gross of awls, two or three dozen little folding knives (jambettes), and some plain and fancy beads with which to buy fish or other commodities from the nations you meet, in order to feast you Indian companions, and be sure to tell them from the outset that here is something with which to buy fish.
- Always carry something during the portages.
- Do not be ceremonious with the Indians.
- Do not begin to paddle unless you intend always to paddle.
- The Indians will keep later that opinion of you which they have formed during the trip.
 - Always show any other Indians you meet on the way a cheerful face and show that you readily accept the fatigues of the journey.