



MARTYRS' SHRINE

SHRINE MESSAGE

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A Message From **the Director of Martyrs' Shrine**

Dear Pilgrims and Friends,

It is with profound joy that I write to you sharing in the wonderful news that, after two years of closure, this season Martyrs' Shrine re-opened its doors!

Once again, Holy Mass was said in the Church of St. Joseph. Empty fields were filled with pilgrims. Processions returned to our pathways. And, peoples of diverse culture, from across the continent, took up anew their journey with St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions toward Christ Jesus our Lord.

In this edition of the Martyrs' Shrine Message, you are offered a taste this exciting experience. You will read a reflection from Fr. Robert Foliot, SJ, sharing his experience of joining us amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the difference serving pilgrims has brought to his experience. You will meet Fr. Wayne Bolton, SJ, who has just recently joined in our ministry, our new Assistant Caretaker Alexis Lamoureux, and Mrs. Louise Leone, our new Chair of the Board of Trustees. Get an inside glimpse of our new food truck: The Big Canoe. Read about our new road surface markings laid to help pilgrims navigate the site in greater safety. And, most especially, join us in praying this year's novena with the Canadian Martyrs' – beginning this 16 September.

In the pages ahead, you will also see a way that you can help us in a very important project. I have been informed that our septic system, which works very well, nevertheless requires expansion. As we welcome more and more pilgrims, it is very important that we can support them in a healthy way that continues to preserve our natural environment. More pilgrims mean larger tanks to support their human waste. To raise the necessary monies required, this year we are having a special campaign called Rise Again from which we hope to raise \$100,000.00.

It cannot be said enough how happy all of the Jesuit Fathers and staff were to be able to once more serve pilgrims here at Martyrs' Shrine. We thank you for your prayers and support that helps us to continue in our ministry of healing and spiritual renewal.

St. Jean de Brébeuf and companions – pray for us.

Sincerely,

Fr. Michael Knox, SJ
Director



A JESUIT REFLECTS ON OUR RE-OPENING



This is holy ground. Jean de Brébeuf and Companions were missioned here 400 years ago. We 5 Jesuits were missioned here for the same reason – to share Jesus Christ with the Indigenous people. The early Jesuits did not know that they were bringing the deadly smallpox with them, to the very people they had come to love.

We, however, knew that unknowingly we could give and receive the deadly Covid 19 virus. We could unwittingly share the virus with the people we wanted to serve, to the people who came seeking healing through the prayers of the Canadian Martyrs. The only responsible thing to do was to keep the gates of the Shrine locked. For 2 whole years we witnessed people kneeling, praying and leaving candles at the gate and we could not comfort them. That was hard! So, we searched for ways to respond. We celebrated a virtual Mass every Sunday, we preached virtual retreats, we phoned as many pilgrims as we could, and we prayed regularly for all the friends of the Shrine. But it was so lonely and unfulfilling; not even the seagulls visited! We could not see the

faith in the eyes of the thousands who come to the Shrine seeking favours and grace.

Finally on May 7, 2022, the gates were opened and the crowds returned. What I enjoy most is the long lines of people waiting to be blessed with the relics of the martyrs. It is such a privilege to see their eyes filled with faith and be able to pray for each person or family individually. Buses bringing groups of pilgrims from far away and carloads of laughing children, the future of the world, have made us all come alive. Like Jean de Brébeuf and Companions we are once again able to share Jesus and to receive inspiration from all who come.

Fr. Robert Foliot, SJ



WE RISE AGAIN: EXPLORING THE NATURAL WORLD AT MARTYRS' SHRINE

As our Director, Fr. Michael said, "once again we open wide to pilgrims, students, and tourists, the Jesuit Fathers and staff celebrate the grace we received amidst unprecedented struggle and joyfully return to a very active life of service. Once again Mass is being said in the Church of St. Joseph. Empty fields now often filled with pilgrims. Processions have returned to our pathways. And, people of diverse culture, from across the continent, are taking up anew their journey with St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions."

This year, a major focus of the Jesuit Fathers and staff is the land – the trees, the gardens, our aquafer, the earth, all of the natural spaces that provide for you moments of encounter with God, and all of the infrastructure that supports it. In doing so, it has become clear that a part of that infrastructure requiring attention is our septic system. In the earth, supporting an essential service of our pilgrims by naturally defusing human waste, it functions well, but we have been informed by government inspection that it requires expansion. Welcoming so many people, sometimes now thousands per day, we wish to ensure that our services meet their needs in a safe, healthy way that also cares for the beautiful spaces of Creation that God has here entrusted to us.

The cost of expanding our septic system is over \$300,000.00. So, this year's online fundraising event, entitled: We Rise Again, aims to raise \$100,000.00 towards this necessary expansion. Most humbly, we share with you, that our loving service to others is only possible by grace and your generous care. We beg your support in this project by making a donation at www.martyrs-shrine.com/give-now/we-rise-again/ and, in doing so, invite you to share in our care of both pilgrims and these Sacred grounds of healing. As a thank-you for your gift, we offer you access to our latest documentary, We Rise Again: Exploring the Natural World at Martyrs' Shrine!



We Rise Again
Exploring the natural world
at Martyrs' Shrine.

Fundraising
Special

Save the Date:
September 24, 2022
www.martyrs-shrine.com/give-now/we-rise-again



BRANDING AND WAYFINDING UNDERWAY THIS YEAR

2022 has marked a milestone year for a new branding and wayfinding system at Martyrs' Shrine. Design and installation work has started with more phases to roll out over the coming year.

Wayfinding refers to a system that assists people navigate the physical space of the Shrine site and helps them to better build an experience in addition to better sense of well-being, safety and security. As built environments become more complex, people need the assistance of maps, directions and symbols to better navigate them.

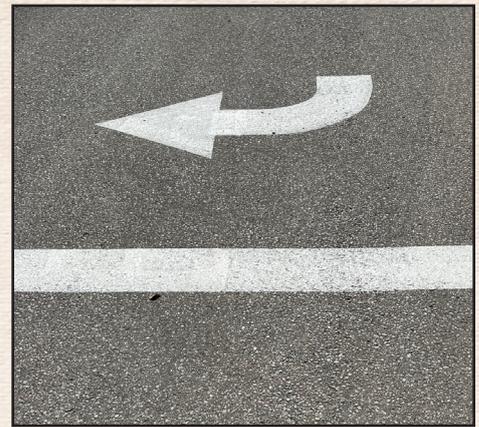
Martyrs' Shrine welcomes people from around the world and with different language ability, and they access the site in a variety of ways: as motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, or aboard a tour bus. Depending on their itinerary for the day, visitors can begin and end their day in different spaces at Martyrs' Shrine and it is important that everybody can comfortably navigate those spaces when they are here.



This year we have developed a new and exciting Site Map of Martyrs' Shrine which will be posted in large scale format at all major congregation/meeting spaces on the property, including the court yard area around the Shrine Church, St. Joseph's Square - a newly minted destination which includes the Giftshop and food services area of the property - and our Visitor Centre. As well, a new Visitor Guide & Map was developed streamlining the Site Map into a pocket-friendly companion for self-guided tours which can be picked up in the Visitor Centre or the Shrine Giftshop.



The roadways of the property have also begun transformation as fresh resurfacing work has been done to the courtyard areas around the Shrine Church and to St. Joseph's Square. These areas will serve as pedestrian-only spaces for gathering, eating, events and programming,



keeping pilgrims safely away from motorized vehicles. The vehicular roadways have been lined to delineate traffic lanes and establish right-of-way and directional symbols added to assist drivers as they navigate to and from parking areas. These will be reinforced with street signage that will describe various attraction points on the property as well as entrance and exit points.

Interpretive signage has also been added to a variety of statues and monuments across the property. These signs provide a brief biography of the statue's character and offers information about their historical or spiritual significance to the Shrine or Catholicism. Together these signs will offer a more meaningful glimpse into the Martyrs' Shrine story and all of the communities that help to contribute to the development of this site over time.

Tyler King,
Marketing & Communications

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

I joined the team at The Martyr's Shrine in early April 2022, just before the kick off to season one (visitor season). I was invited to join the team by the Director and The Caretaker, they felt that my years of experience in commercial maintenance, gardening and industrial snow removal would be an asset.

Previous to working in the Commercial Maintenance industry I pursued my great passion for horses as a professional groomer and, my favourite, specializing in reproductive care. Mares and foals have my heart! I now proudly own one of the grown up babies from that life, my Charlie horse. Charlie is a successfully retired Off-Track Thoroughbred. He is a wonderful, shining reminder that hard work pays off.

I am a proud citizen of The Métis Nation of Ontario. My family comes from the Drummond Island Voyageurs who helped settle Southern Georgian Bay. I care deeply for the history and stewardship of this land. Working at Martyrs' Shrine and caring for a site that brings people to the region feels like a special opportunity to share what I feel is one of the most beautiful places in the world.

Outside of work I build on my love of the outdoors, canoeing, hiking and hacking the trails and waterways of Georgian Bay, Muskoka and beyond.

Alexis Lamoureux,
Caretaker's Assistant.



As someone who was locally born and raised in Midland, I recall from my youth the wonder and awe I would feel at the sight of the Martyrs' Shrine on car rides with my mother and grandmother. As an adult those feelings have not wavered. Daily I feel the immense joy that emanates from each visitor, listening to their stories and their reasons for coming here. I'm pleased to be the front office receptionist here, which combines my background of office administration and customer service which was mainly in the retail and transportation industries. From hearing pilgrims sing, to the bells that peal without fail, to answering questions about our area and history, I feel like I belong.

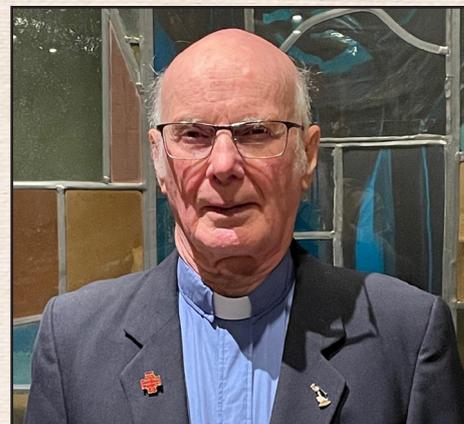
Tracy-Lynn Staunton,
Receptionist



During my early years on Wolfe Island I enjoyed watching 'salties' (ocean going vessels) on the St. Lawrence River. Binoculars established their countries of origin. This international outlook has matured in the various parishes in which I have served, parishioners coming from Europe, the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. A treasured time was the sabbatical in 1993, three weeks in the Holy Land and the Sinai Peninsula, followed by three months in Jamaica. Here at the Shrine one can appreciate the customs and devotions of the pilgrims whose ancestry is truly global. Our Roman Catholic Church is definitely 'catholic' in the Greek sense of universal and global. Our gospel for Sunday August 21st highlighted God's ingathering of His people into His kingdom, from east to west, from north to south.

Prior to being missioned here I has served in parished in St. John's, Halifax, Toronto and Thunder Bay. It has been a great blessing accompanying those people on their lifelong pilgrimages. Pilgrims gere might pray for health, for a baby, or for relatives in a distant land. Kindly continue your good prayers for the pilgrims and for ourselves, that Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life continues His accompaniment of us all.

Fr. Wayne Bolton, SJ



OUR NEW FOOD SERVICE AT MARTYRS' SHRINE: THE BIG CANOE!



Still a fundamental symbol of various Indigenous cultures in Canada today, the canoe, for centuries, served as an essential part of their travel, trade, and hunting – a fact well known to all of the martyrs we honour here. Learning the skills of paddling and navigation from their Indigenous companions, they took to the waters of this great land hoping to share their love of Jesus Christ with others. So, when

it was decided to open a new food truck at Martyrs' Shrine, it felt natural to draw upon this symbol, and name it The Big Canoe!

With a broad menu, developed by our Métis Chef, Jason Reynolds, the Big Canoe offers to our pilgrim delicious options that range from Reubens to Beaver Tails. "It's not your typical food truck", says Chef Jason,

'...we strive to provide a restaurant quality experience for all of our visitors'. Moreover, each item has a clever name that speaks to our story, so that even ordering your lunch becomes an opportunity to learn something of St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions.

With a dedicated team onboard, the Big Canoe opened, or perhaps 'took to the water' in June and, since its opening has served thousands of visitors to Martyrs' Shrine. This being said, having a food truck means that we can also share this gift beyond the grounds of Martyrs' Shrine and, this autumn, we take the canoe out to serve others at various events around Simcoe County.

On your next pilgrimage to Martyrs' Shrine consider stopping at the Big Canoe and sharing in this new experience!

MESSAGE FROM MRS. LOUISE LEONE, CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dear Pilgrims and friends,

It is with great honour and humility that I write this first message as your new Chair of the Board of Trustees. I thank you for the trust you have put in me and I look forward to contributing to this new chapter in the history of the Shrine.

Our doors reopened only three and half months ago, but already our pilgrimages have restarted, all our programs are up and running and

it is wonderfully heartwarming to see our church and gardens filled not only with our devout pilgrims, but with members of our larger community. The reopening could not have happened without the tireless, determined and energetic Father Michael and the Jesuit Fathers as well as the entire staff.

My focus areas for this year will be to support the We Rise Again campaign and to grow the membership on the Board of Directors to ensure we have a diverse and inclusive leadership team that continues to make everyone feel welcome at Martyrs' Shrine.

Before concluding, I leave you with a reminder that we have put in place a Strategic Plan for the next six years, to help shape our actions in responses to all the changes that have affected the Catholic cultural landscape over the last few years. This plan puts our faith

into action, prioritizes reconciliation and justice, works to aid in the ongoing formation of all Christians and recognizes the sacredness of God's creation that we inhabit. I invite you to read the details on our website and join us in our journey.

Once again, thank you for allowing me the honour of serving our faithful pilgrims and the entire Shrine community. I cannot wait to get our many projects underway and to working with my colleagues on the Board of Trustees, Father Michael and the whole team. Here's to a fresh reopening, new ideas and working together.

Faithfully,

Louise Leone
Chair of the Board of Trustees

VISION

That all people have joined St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions in building a culture of love with Jesus Christ.

MISSION

Martyrs' Shrine offers a holy and historic space of education, spiritual conversation, and Sacrament, sharing with people, of every faith and community, the divine mystery of self-sacrificing love, witnessed in the lives of St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions, and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

VALUES

Loving Service
Sacramental Life,
Stewardship,
Hospitality, and
Education