



MARTYRS' SHRINE

SHRINE MESSAGE

1 September 2021 | Volume 84, No.2 | Fall 2021



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

"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?" (Matthew 6: 25-27)

Never, in its over 95-year history, has the mission of Martyrs' Shrine been carried by so few who have offered so much. Since our closure in March 2020, as we have navigated the waves of COVID-19, it has been the faithful, generous, and loving care of benefactors, our small staff, and dedicated volunteers, who have allowed us to preserve our Church, Jesuit community, buildings, gardens, grounds, and forests.

This edition of the Martyrs' Shrine Message is a humble testament to this recent, and turbulent, part of our history. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Church of St. Joseph, at

this time, would be filled with pilgrims attending Mass, but now our Mass is shared with pilgrims via the internet.

Our candle room once receiving a constant stream of the faithful, now has a single priest, quietly offering prayers of behalf of thousands who could not be here. Where there was a receptionist and Jesuit who together welcomed pilgrims in our administrative centre, the Jesuit alone, answers the phone, often offering spiritual conversation to many who call seeking prayers and counsel. The grounds, once tended by a large team, is cared for by our Caretaker, two very hard-working summer students,

and two Jesuits. A once robust management and administrative team replaced by me and members of our Board of Trustees who volunteer their talents. And yet, as we struggle through this, perhaps, our collective pilgrimage, there are great moments of hope and consolation.

The gift of creativity has brought us to new means, through various technologies, to offer, online, Sunday Mass, retreats, Stations of the Cross, and prayer services of various kinds, that have been joined by thousands of people. Petitions we receive from pilgrims online are offered by the Jesuits in our community chapel.





Moreover, as restrictions continue to lift, all of us were thrilled to offer a Family Package, where families of 6 can visit us, have Mass, receive blessings, and walk through some of our gardens; a truly unique experience now enjoyed by hundreds of visitors!

The great enterprise for us now, of course, is to beg the spiritual and material resources required to open in May of 2022. Not dampened in spirit, the Jesuit Fathers, staff, and volunteers of Martyrs' Shrine look ahead, with enthusiasm, to re-opening.

Moving from a place of preservation, to one of new growth, from old pandemic

restrictions to new opportunity, and the great grace of welcoming you all. Already, last autumn, your response to our need was unprecedented, and it was your support that has kept us going until now.

To open in 2022, I will need your help again. I must find the means to re-hire staff, re-open and clean buildings that have lied dormant, replace the roof of our gift-shop, modestly renew our gardens, clear roads, change signage, re-activate our Guest House, and advertise to new generations of pilgrims.

Despite the obstacles we have faced,

present to us all, in sundry ways, has been the words of Christ, 'do not worry about your life' – His promise of love and care. This, more than any other way, of late, embodied in your care for us.

As we pray the novena to St. Jean de Brébeuf and his companions, I know that you will be thinking of us, as we here pray your intentions. Once again, I thank you all for your support, and remain united with you in prayer until we see each other again in the spring.

- Fr. Michael Knox, SJ



ONLINE MASS FILMING



Before Vatican II, Mass was offered *on behalf* of the people. After the Council, Mass was celebrated with the people. Mass is a dialogue whose highlight is the priest's *Through Him, with Him, and in Him*, confirmed by the people's *Amen!* A congregation does not realize its power. Its vitality and its attitude are a call which fashions my behaviour as a priest.

To say Mass alone, in front of a camera, makes me try to imagine who is out there, what they might need and how my words and my behaviour could possibly influence them.

Without response, I never quite know, I can only trust. "Here it is, Lord, it is now up to you." And the Holy Spirit makes things happen!

- Fr. Robert Foliot, SJ

www.martyrs-shrine.com/request-a-mass-for-your-intention

CARING FOR THE GROUNDS DURING COVID-19 CLOSURE

"Nothing is impossible, it comes down to determination to succeed."

It started out as any other winter's day at Martyrs' Shrine, the grounds quiet, and at peace, under her blanket of white snow.

I was three weeks into a five-week project, our loft renovation, when the announcement came across the radio that the COVID-19 outbreak is now considered a pandemic. With the news of global shutdown, at home lock downs, and near panic setting in, we still carried on.

When the day came that we had run out of time to delay, the decision was made that we would not be opening our gates for the 2020 season. Then the question: how will the grounds survive? No Staff... The saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child, well the truth is it takes a team to care for the grounds of Martyrs Shrine.

She is a large property and the usual team of seven was now one!

Knowing that it would be impossible to care for it all, the question became how to maintain enough to keep her from falling behind.

What we always forget while constantly trying to shape the world we live in, is that given the chance our natural world bounces back. I have seen the change in the grounds having had a full year of rest, the property is more lush than many of us had seen in our lifetime.

Almost as a daylily stops to flower after becoming overgrown and returns with a new stronger beauty after being moved in the garden. Ready for a dazzling show the next year.

- Mr. Evan Lamoureux, Caretaker



SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION ON THE PHONE



The Shrine Prayer Hotline was a God send to the many whom we could reach out to during the harsh and hard times of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was like a breath of fresh air, and life line to many who needed help, while facing disparaging circumstances.

Although it was slow in the beginning, as many were not aware of its existence, once it became known, it was a real blessing to the many who called in. Given sound counselling by the Jesuit fathers available five days a week, many benefitted by this, and felt that they had a sort of a line of hope to counsel and comfort them in their need.

- Fr. Patrick Coldricks, SJ

MARTYRS' SHRINE JESUIT HOTLINE: 1-855-495-PRAY(7729)

MARTYRS' SHRINE

LOVE IN ACTION

"HELP US RE-OPEN OUR DOORS TO THE WORLD IN 2022"

Premiere: **SEPTEMBER 26th** Last day to watch: **OCTOBER 3rd**

'A one-hour documentary sharing Our Struggle, Gratitude, and Hopes over the past year'

- SUGGESTED DONATION OF \$75.00 PER PERSON -

For this online event : www.martyrs-shrine.com/love-in-action

OUR PRAYER FOR THE FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES



Blessed St. Jean de Brébeuf and companions,
holy Kateri Tekakwitha,
join us in our prayers to the Creator, our God,
for the children who died in all
former residential schools,
and for all of those impacted by this tragedy.
We pray that there may be healing founded on truth,
that the Spirit will inspire our
ongoing commitment to reconciliation,
and that sincere action will follow.

This we ask through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

ONLINE RETREAT

The retreat that I recorded for the Shrine's website was my first of its kind. It was produced for the Lenten season, based on some of the writings of St. Jean de Brébeuf.

The preparation gave me great consolation. It was an opportunity to learn more about this Jesuit and his mission in Wendat lands during the mid-17th century.

The delivery before a camera was also a great experience, but, also very new to me. During the two and a half hours that it took to record, I felt like I was reading the news on TV, and related with one of my sisters who is a news broadcaster before the camera!

The Shrine will send you paper copy of this retreat, if you ask.

- Fr. Louis-Martin Cloutier, SJ



LIGHTING CANDLES FOR PILGRIMS



CANDLE in the wind(ow)

In the window of our Candle Room, these days, are dozens of flickering flames – glowing reminders of the faith, hope and love expressed to God through us at Martyrs' Shrine. With widely different intentions, devotees of the Jesuit Martyr-Saints of North America place their petitions in our hands – prayers are offered to show thanksgiving, concern for health and safety, justice and peace on the world stage, financial and housing matters, success in studies, to be granted a new child, and for folks deceased, etc.

On behalf of these (and other important) matters, we add our own, saying, St. Jean de Brébeuf and Companions, pray for us. St. Joseph, Patron of our Martyrs, pray for us. Holy Mary, Queen of Martyrs, pray for us.

- Fr. S. LeBlanc, SJ

www.martyrs-shrine.com/light-a-candle

OUR FAMILY PACKAGE

Greetings readers, I would like to introduce myself as the newest member to the Martyrs Shrine Staff and its Programmes Leader. My name is Christoph Lorenz, and I am happy to be part of the Martyrs' Shrine Family.

2021 finally gave me the opportunity to interact directly with some visitors through our beautiful Family Package. Interacting with new and returning visitors gave me plenty of insights into how important our Shrine is to pilgrims.

Many of our visitors have recently experienced loss and hardships in their family amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and were unable to find an outlet for spiritual help or relief. Others come to be close to St. Jean de Brebeuf and his companions, or to simply enjoy the beautiful and inspiring grounds of Martyrs Shrine.

It is just an incredible feeling to be part of the Shrine, and to encounter so much joy and true appreciation for such a beautiful and unique place in of our country.

- Mr. Christoph Lorenz, Programmes Leader

Call us at 1-855-526-3788 to book a package.



MESSAGE FROM MR. BRIAN BEAL, CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dear Benefactors, Donors, Friends of The Martyrs' Shrine:

I am so pleased to write to you on behalf of the Board of Trustees of The Martyrs' Shrine.

We last met as a board, via Zoom of course, on Tuesday, July 6th, 2020 -- for both our regular board meeting and for our Annual Meeting. At our Annual Meeting we were able to approve our 2020 audited financial

statements, and despite being closed for all of 2020, we were able to maintain a stable financial position due to the careful stewardship and leadership of our Jesuit Fathers and staff.

The overarching theme of both of these meetings, and indeed permeating all of our conversations as trustees, has been a theme of deep and abiding gratitude for our donors, benefactors and friends of The Martyrs' Shrine. This has been such a difficult time for so many in our communities, throughout our country, and indeed throughout the world.

It seems unimaginable that when we closed our gates in October 2019 that they would remain closed to this day. Despite being physically closed, we have been sustained by the outpouring of support, through financial contributions, by gifts in kind, and by the countless people who are praying for our success. As a board of trustees we are also grateful not only for the ongoing

health of our Jesuit Fathers and our limited staff, but also for their tireless efforts to keep the work and the spirit of The Martyrs' Shrine alive and well. Even though the gates are closed to the public this season, there is much that is going on as we look forward to our reopening in May 2022.

We encourage you to stay connected with us through our website at www.martyrs-shrine.com.

We also encourage you to continue to be as generous as possible in these coming weeks, with your ongoing financial support, with your well wishes, and with your prayers.

Please continue to keep The Martyrs' Shrine in your prayers, as the Jesuit Fathers will surely keep each of you in theirs.

With deep gratitude and appreciation,

Brian Beal
Chair of Board of Trustees
The Martyrs' Shrine

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