

The Friend of Brother André



FALL 2021

Major Development Project

WORK RESUMES

Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal has taken the necessary measures to advance and complete its major development project. Last June, the work to build a new welcome centre and to reconfigure the gardens has been awarded to Pomerleau, a general contractor and construction project manager.

"Saint Joseph's Oratory wishes to resume work quickly so as to respect the commitments it has made with funders, donors and pilgrims. This vast development and restoration project will allow us to significantly improve our infrastructure for welcoming people and providing services. When this project is complete, we will be able to offer visitors from around the world a greener, more enjoyable to visit and more accessible site," said Father Michael DeLaney, CSC, Rector of Saint Joseph's Oratory.

A more accessible place

"Pomerleau is proud to collaborate with Saint Joseph's Oratory on the expansion and beautification of this iconic piece of Montréal's heritage. It is an honour to be able to carry out this work, which will embellish the image of the mountain and make this place of worship even more accessible to pilgrims and the citizens of Montréal," underlined Martin Jacques, Executive Vice-President – Bâtiment Québec at Pomerleau.

The construction site, officially inaugurated in March 2019, was already experiencing significant delays by the fall of 2020. The contractor Decarel halted the work following disputes related to the execution of the work and the associated amounts, among other things. Since there was no agreement, the Oratory terminated the contract with this contractor.



A vast construction site gives a glimpse of the location of the future building, which will be accessible as soon as you enter the site. Photo: André Charron, CSC

A new welcome centre and more

The major development project of Saint Joseph's Oratory includes building a new welcome centre, reconfiguring the gardens and the Holy Family Plaza, renovating the carillon and the museum and upgrading the dome of the Basilica. This work, at a cost of \$110 million, has been made thanks to the financial support of the Quebec government (\$30.8 million), the Canadian government (\$22 million) and the City of Montréal (\$10 million). The business community, the religious communities and the public have also contributed a total of \$15.8 million.

Saint Joseph's Oratory is the custodian of an exceptional religious, historical, architectural and cultural heritage that promotes Montréal as a destination for close to two million visitors each year.



THE LIGHT OF HOPE

For the past few weeks, we have felt a wind of normality blowing through Saint Joseph's Oratory. Of course, we are still applying sanitary measures to offer our visitors a safe place and the number of visitors is still reduced to 250. But when we think of the strict limits imposed over the past eighteen months, we can only rejoice.

The number of candles lit in the votive chapel and on the altars clearly indicates that the friends of the Oratory are back. And that is good to see! Each of these candles represents prayers that have been requested by each of you. And they become for us a living sacrament of Faith, Hope and Light! A reminder of the Light of Christ that helps us to see and invites us to join in the prayers of all those who made this flame spring up in the votive chapel.

This light is also for us a sign of hope, a bit like the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel". These lighted lanterns and prayers indicate that the Oratory is slowly regaining its rhythm, that life is returning. And we hope that together we will move towards a better future, leaving the pandemic behind us.

We continue to pray for those who have suffered, for the health professionals and the caregivers, knowing that we have learned a great deal as well in these difficult times. There have been great movements of solidarity and moments of grace. We have stood together. To the friends, benefactors and Associates of Brother André, we express our gratitude. You have supported us, you have kept in touch with us and, on our side, we have done our best to keep in touch with you. Isn't that what friends do?

Friends stand together and do what they can for each other in times of need. For us, your commitment, your prayers, and your continued dedication and interest in the Oratory, are synonymous with friendship. A friendship that will keep us going, growing and feeling stronger.

May God bless each of you and your loved ones.

Father Michael M. DeLaney, CSC
Rector

Philanthropic Development A New Director

"Saint Joseph's Oratory is a powerful symbol of hope for everyone who has visited it over the past 117 years," said Carole Lemieux, who took office on May 25 as Director of Philanthropic Development.

Having worked as a manager in both finance and philanthropy, Mrs. Lemieux is passionate about serving the common good. She has worked in the area of socio-economic development, has been actively involved at her children's schools, and makes environmentally friendly choices in her day-to-day life—by driving an electric car, for example!

Born in Abitibi, and raised on a farm by religious parents with her grandparents Germaine and Joseph close at hand, Carole Lemieux could see the Oratory towering over Montréal each time she came to the city to visit family.

Our new director encourages the public to support the work founded by Saint Brother André and to contribute to its continued mission into the future. "We all have a role to play in maintaining this place of openness, gathering and reflection, within the means available to us."

Carole Lemieux would like to put the Philanthropic Development team's skills and resources to good use in supporting the Oratory's generous and loyal donors as well as recruiting a new generation of donors. "Philanthropy is not about begging for money," she observed. "It's about offering kind-hearted individuals an opportunity to contribute to a cause greater than themselves."

"I hope I will be able to inspire people of all ages to make a difference," noted Mrs. Lemieux who already has many new projects and ideas to highlight "the Oratory's tremendous value to our community."



Before joining the Oratory, Carole Lemieux held various key positions in philanthropy, development and finance, including at Development and Peace - Caritas Canada and at the Archdiocese of Ottawa.



Saint Joseph in sacred art

Saint Joseph is among the most depicted saints in Christian art, aside from Mary, the Mother of God. His depictions throughout history, however, were not inspired by mere devotion. Rather, the world's greatest artists were "responsible for transforming Joseph" to address the needs of the Church in times of social, pastoral and theological difficulty, said renowned art historian Elizabeth Lev.



In the mosaics of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, in Rome, Joseph wears a short tunic and an orange cloak over his shoulder.

During a free spring webinar in Rome on Saint Joseph in Christian art, Elizabeth Lev explained how unlike Mary who was present even in the earliest Christian art, Joseph was not depicted until the fifth century, after Christianity became the sole religion of the Roman Empire and the great age of church-building had begun.

Joseph made an "incredible debut" in the mosaics in the apse of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, built in Rome between 432 and 450, where he appears five times — more than Jesus and Mary. Here, a young, strong Joseph wears a short tunic and an orange cloak over his shoulder. His outfit resembles that worn by the Praetorian guards, whose charge was to protect the emperor and his family. This depiction, said Lev, was to communicate to the faithful that Joseph was the protector of Mary and Jesus.

"What really captures the imagination of artists is the idea of Joseph, who has a very special and privileged communication with God."

A model for the faithful

With the great age of Church reform in the 11th century that focused on moral integrity, artists began depicting Joseph as a role model for how people should live their faith, Lev said. "What really captures the imagination of artists is the idea of Joseph, who has a very special and privileged communication with God," she explained. Building on this idea of Joseph as role model for the faithful, sacred art of the 13th century focused on Joseph's "ordinariness and radical spirit of service."

The presentation of Jesus' two natures — human and divine — is finally captured clearly in Giotto's rendition of the Nativity, she said. The upper part of the painting depicts Mary, holding Jesus and gazing at him in adoration. The lower part has Joseph watching Jesus as he is being fed and washed.



A famous representation of the Nativity by Giotto, which can be found in the Basilica of San Francesco, in Assisi.



A GIFT BY WILL

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Young husband and father

During the Renaissance, when marriage was in crisis in society, especially among the elite, and the Church sought to reinforce its theology of marriage, said Lev. A number of paintings emerged of the wedding of Joseph and Mary, including by artistic greats Raphael and Perugino. These paintings used perspective — the view into infinity — to communicate the idea that marriage is eternal. All of them included a priest to underline marriage as a sacrament, as well as the role of the Church in conferring the sacrament. And they all showed the bride and groom extending hands to each other to communicate the consent required in marriage, she explained.

“An explosion of truly glorious art depicted Joseph as a young husband and father, engaged in ordinary, everyday moments with his family.”

What followed the wedding paintings was “an explosion of truly glorious art of Joseph as a young husband and father, engaged in ordinary, everyday moments with his family”, explained the art historian. Paintings, such as de La Tour's depiction of Joseph working in his studio, while a young Jesus holds a candle and watches him work, make their way onto the scene. “For the first time, we see the father and son alone together, working together, sharing together, so it becomes this magnificent exchange,” said Lev.



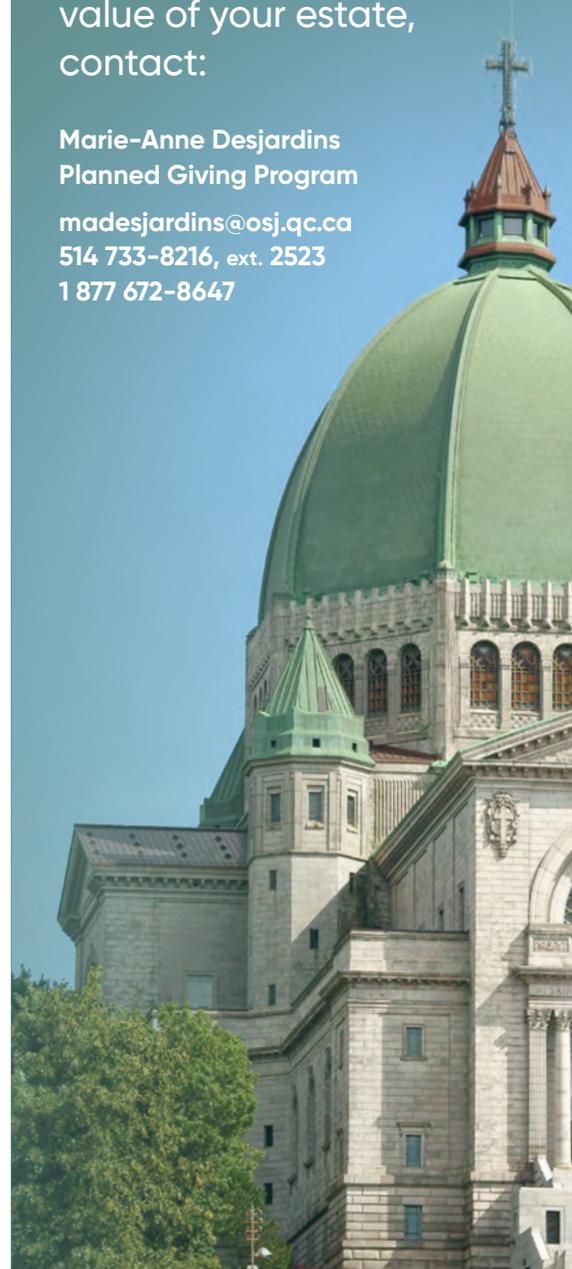
De La Tour depicted Joseph working in his studio, while a young Jesus holds a candle and watches him work.

New horizons

“As missionaries begin to make their way into the New World, new depictions of Saint Joseph, represented in ways particular to those cultures, indicate how quickly and deeply devotion to Saint Joseph had developed there”, said Elizabeth Lev.

Today, contemporary artists continue to explore new ways to depict Saint Joseph, relevant to the time, drawing forth aspects of this holy man to serve the needs of the Church and to inspire the faithful to holiness and courage.

Laura Ieraci, *Special collaboration*



Motivated by gratitude

Jean-Paul Gagnon has fond memories of his visits to the Oratory when he was just a small boy. But the Oratory was more than just a part of his family's story. It became the place for his mission as a Holy Cross Brother. "I wanted to be exactly like Brother André and nothing less," he said.

"When I was only knee-high to a grasshopper, a few years after the passing of Brother André, I would accompany my maternal grandmother to the services for the sick at Saint Joseph's Oratory," said Brother Jean-Paul Gagnon, CSC. "That was how I began to learn about Brother André, and his love for the sick, the poor and the abandoned."

"I had an aunt who was healed by the miracle worker of Mount Royal," he added. "Needless to say, that healing affected our whole family. We just loved the Oratory!"

Continuing Brother André's work

Having chosen to enter the same religious order as that of the person he held in such high esteem, he said that his "desire was to continue Brother André's work." That long-awaited opportunity arrived in 1964. "To my utter delight, I was appointed to the shrine. Over the years, I've been given various responsibilities: sacristan, liturgical reader, person in charge of the donation boxes in businesses in Montréal and surrounding areas, photographer, decorator, liaison for the Volunteer Firemen, person in charge of the Information and Blessings Office, etc."

A step of gratitude

Brother Jean-Paul Gagnon, CSC, continues to serve the pilgrims who come to the Oratory, receiving them at the Information and Blessings Office. His life's journey has allowed him to follow in Brother André's footsteps as he had so fervently desired. As a sign of his gratitude, he has chosen to make a gesture in tribute of the women who inspired his vocation.



Photo: N. Dumas

"In memory of my mother and my grandmother, a step will be dedicated to each of them in the staircase leading to the Oratory's dome."

This gesture will also pay tribute to the founder of this great architectural work; a gift that will contribute to its development. "I feel tremendous gratitude toward my friend, my brother, Saint Brother André, to whom I owe so much," said the Holy Cross Brother.

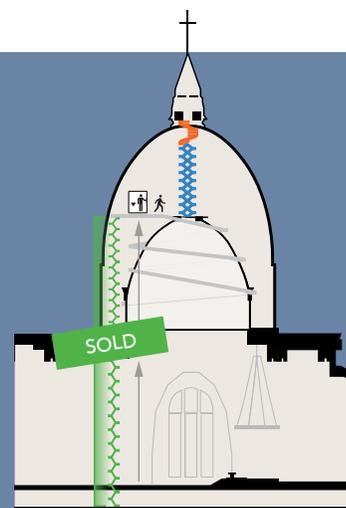
For all of these reasons, Jean-Paul Gagnon, CSC, has contributed to the campaign to buy a step leading to the future observatory that will be located in the Basilica's dome.

And you? What motivates you when making a gift to the Oratory?

THANK YOU! We are reaching new heights BECAUSE OF YOU!

All of the \$2,500 steps leading to the future observatory in the dome of the Basilica have been sold! Steps at \$5,000 and \$25,000 are still available. Contact us! donations@osj.qc.ca

To all of you, thank you for supporting the development of this spiritual landmark!



The praising voices of La Schola

Conducted by Adam Wills Begley, *La Schola de l'Oratoire* has recorded four hymns to Saint Joseph for this special year dedicated to him. The choir performs *L'Église te vénère / O Joseph Mighty Patron* (harm. by J.S. Bach), *Noble Époux de Marie* (harm. by R. Daveluy), *Saint Joseph, Meek and Mild* (harm. by E.W. Goldsmith) and *Joseph, lieber Joseph mein* (Hieronymous Praetorius) accompanied by Vincent Boucher on the Casavant organ in the Crypt Church of Saint Joseph's Oratory. A beautiful musical tribute to Saint Joseph! The videos are available on the Oratory's website and its YouTube channel.



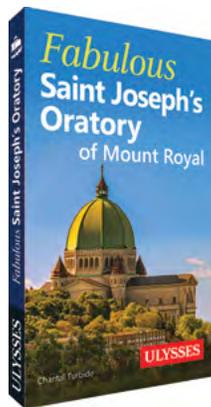
Left to right: Adam Wills Begley, Dwain Richardson, Kimberley Lynch, Thomas Jodoin-Fontaine, Bella Cuminato, Léo K. McKenna, Janelle Marina Lucyk, Kerry Bursey and Anna Lewton-Brain.



A new exhibition

On the occasion of the Year of Saint Joseph, an exhibition prepared by the Oratory Museum team presents a selection of works of art, objects and ex-votos that highlight devotion to Saint Joseph.

A must-see! – 4th floor, free



Fabulous Oratory

Discover the heritage and artistic richness of this major pilgrimage site in North America!

Chantal Turbide, Curator of the Museum and Artistic Heritage of the Oratory, offers an in-depth exploration of this great shrine and its treasures.

Ulysse Guides, 2021, 96 pages illustrated with splendid photos.

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A lovely destination

The Oratory was one of the discovery destinations of the French reality show *L'amour est dans le pré*, broadcast last spring on the Noovo channel. The show features farmers who are searching for their true love. During the filming on fall 2020, Denis and Ève, a couple from Neuville and Saint-Raymond, respectively, near Québec City, took advantage of an outing to Montréal to visit Saint Joseph's Oratory.

Denis, who was visiting the shrine for the first time, was in awe of the splendour of the Beckerath organ and the talent of titular organist Vincent Boucher. The two lovebirds said they were very moved when walking hand in hand down the aisle of the Basilica. Aerial shots, included in the show, provided stunning views of the Oratory's dome and the Côte-des-Neiges neighbourhood.

2021
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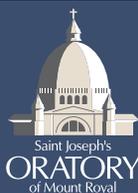
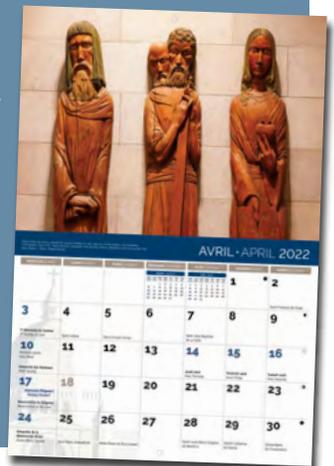
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• *Liturgical Feast Days and important dates at the Oratory*



3800 QUEEN MARY ROAD
MONTREAL QC H3V 1H6
514 733-8211
WWW.SAINT-JOSEPH.ORG



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