



Living the Heritage



Saint Brother André,
you followed a path to the Lord
marked by prayer
and welcoming of others.
Help us to welcome as you did,
the people whom life puts
on our path.

You trusted your friend
SAINT JOSEPH.
Teach us to know,
trust and love better
the one you chose as
patron of this Oratory.

You surrounded yourself
with men and women,
in building a remarkable
sacred space.
Help us live this precious heritage
of prayer, faith and love.

Lord, guide us
in the footsteps
of this humble brother.
Transform our hearts
so that we can
keep alive this heritage
of fervent prayer
and unconditional welcome.

We pray to you, our Father,
through your Son and in the Spirit.

Amen.

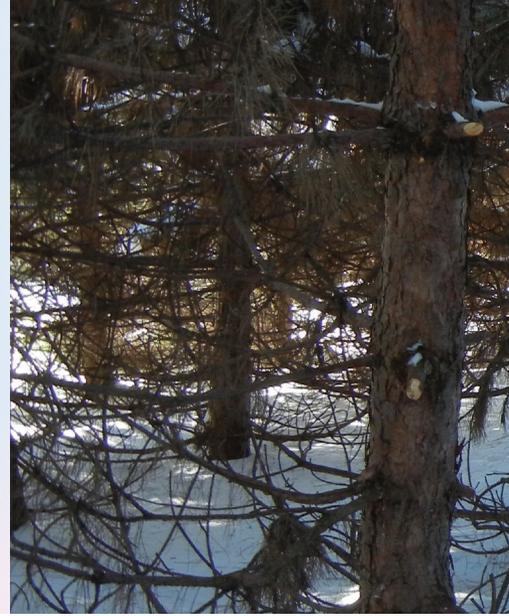
With the collaboration of
Bernard EAST, OP
Yvon POMERLEAU, OP
Michel GOURGUES, OP

SPECIAL SECTION

Novena to Saint Joseph

To walk you through the Novena to Saint Joseph, *The Oratory magazine* has called upon the three Dominicans who will be offering preaching every day at Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal, from March 10 to 18.

We are grateful to Bernard East, Yvon Pomerleau and Michel Gourgues for their contribution to this special section. *Have a good Novena!*



Day 1 SATURDAY, MARCH 10

A Heritage of Liberation

“His coming is as certain as the coming of daybreak.”
(Hosea 6:3)

We are part of a legacy of liberation. Let us become conscious of our sin, of our distance from the Lord. Let us have the courage to say as did the publican, “Have pity on the sinner that I am.” (Luke 18:13)

Let us remember the prophecy of Hosea who tells us about the Lord that “His coming is as certain as the coming of daybreak.” (Hosea 6:3)

In the dark places of our lives, a legacy of liberation awaits us. The Lord comes toward us. Let us welcome him!

Saint Joseph, your life was turned upside down when you found out that the woman who was to become your wife was pregnant. It was beyond understanding. But you took heart when the angel told you in a dream, “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:20) Let us be at the ready when the Lord calls us to serve others in our life.



BERNARD EAST was ordained a priest in 1977 as a member of the Order of Preachers, the Dominicans. He earned a doctorate in theology, and taught moral theology for many years at Dominican University College in Ottawa. After having been appointed assistant to and vicar for the Master of the Order in Rome, he fulfilled many functions within his community, notably Prior and Rector of the Shrine of the Rosary and of Saint Jude. For six years, he was pastor of *Immaculée-Conception* Parish of Montreal. For four years now, he has served as a member of Pastoral Services at Saint Joseph's Oratory.





Photo: Marijke Desmet

Day 2 SUNDAY, MARCH 11
A Heritage of Fidelity

“God is rich in mercy.”
(Ephesians 2:4)

The Second Book of Chronicles speaks about those who have gone before us, “They built up infidelities.” (2 *Chronicles* 36:14)

And what about us? I think that this is something to question ourselves about. Nonetheless, God does not abandon us. He send us messengers to support us and to exhort us to stay on the right path if we have strayed onto a false one. God’s fidelity continues to surround us, even if we ourselves have been unfaithful.

Saint Paul tells us, “God is rich in mercy.” (Ephesians 2:4) By the grace coming from him, God allows us to lead a life in conformity with his wishes and expectations.

The lifting up of the Son of Man (*John* 3:14-15) allows all those who believe in him to have eternal life.



Saint Joseph, you agreed to cooperate with God’s plan for the salvation of humanity: you became the protector of the Holy Family. Allow my life to be in accord with that which the Lord expects of me for the salvation of all humanity.

Day 3 MONDAY, MARCH 12
A Heritage of Salvation

“You have turned my mourning into dancing.” (Psalm 30:11)

The legacy which we have received is to be a bearer of deliverance. Our ancestors in the faith knew exodus and exile; the Church has known and continues to know persecution in certain places.

Saint Joseph, with the Holy Family, was only too aware of what it meant to be a stranger, an emigrant who had to take flight into hostile territory because of the willfulness of Herod who wanted to kill the infant Jesus.

Saint Brother André, his servant, had to leave his native land because of grinding economic crises to find work in the United States.

Jesus drew himself near to anyone who grieved exceedingly, for example someone who suffered the loss of a child. (*John* 4:50)

Saint Joseph believed; Saint André believed; as did the royal official whose son was dying who came to see Jesus, he also believed.



Saint Joseph, you know what it means to flee your country to escape death threats; help all those forced to flee and to immigrate to faraway lands to be received sensitively by their sisters and brothers.



Photos: N. Dumais

Day 4 TUESDAY, MARCH 13
A Heritage Transmitted by Water



Water is part of our daily life. A glass of cool water quenches our thirst; a bath in fresh water cleanses and can perhaps even heal the body; a stream of sweet water is the source of life. Our thirsts are many: the thirst for a glass of water is not different from a thirst for knowledge and even more importantly from a thirst for happiness. Baptism in water and the Spirit is a sacrament for the purification of our heart and the remission of sin. In the waters of baptism, our Christian life takes its birth, and is called on to grow in the fruits of the spirit: charity, joy, peace....

Even locally, in the Oratory's Garden of the Way of the Cross, a large pool of water evokes the mystery of the Paschal Lamb, Jesus, once dead and now risen, who purifies us from our faults and gives us life in abundance. At the entry to the Crypt Church and the Basilica, you find holy water to invite you to make the sign of the cross, that which saves us.

The legacy that we are invited to live out is that which we have received in our baptism and makes us reborn into new life as a child of God.

Saint Joseph, you were at home with the child Jesus for many years and so you drank at the very well-springs of the Christian faith. May our lives develop in daily communion with him who is the core of our faith. Let Brother André be for us a model of limitless confidence in Jesus our Savior who alone can quench our deepest thirsts.



Photo: S. Martin

YVON POMERLEAU entered the Dominicans in 1960; then was ordained a priest in 1969 in Rwanda, where he served as missionary for 25 years. After that, he was appointed Promoter General for the Dominican Family in Rome, and councillor for Apostolic Life to the Master of the Order. Elected prior provincial in 2002, he exercised this function for eight years, contemporaneously with responsibilities within the Canadian Conference of Religious. He presently preaches on Sundays at Saint Joseph's Oratory and assists at *Foyer du monde*, part of a project for temporary housing for refugees.





Saint Joseph, you took care of Jesus for many years during his earthly life as he became the Way, the Truth, and the Life for all he encountered. Let us receive this eternal life in the joy which he promised and bestowed on us. Let Saint André teach us also to be bearers of life through the attention we pay and the mercy we extend.

Day **5** WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14
A Heritage Filled with Life

Life is that which defines us from our birth to our death and even beyond. We talk about human life, the intellectual life, the spiritual life, and eternal life. A life can be filled with happiness or with heartache; one can lead a virtuous life or a debauched life. There are those who must lead a life of anonymity and those who lead a life of celebrity....

Our faith in Jesus, once dead and now risen, is at the heart of our Christian life. Jesus defined himself as the Resurrection and the Life. Through the water of Baptism, we gain his promise of everlasting life. In our ordinary lives, we are called to choose life, and to choose the path of goodness and not that of evil. If we observe God's commandments, and if we walk in the footsteps of Jesus, then we shall live.

Many people come to the Oratory to discover a deepened life through prayer, confession, and participation in the Eucharist.

Our Christian legacy is completely filled with God's life, which is bestowed on us, and invites us, in turn, to be bearers of life.

Day **6** THURSDAY, MARCH 15
A Heritage Borne by Witnesses



Saint Joseph, you were a special witness to the life, words and actions of Jesus. Help us to witness from our experience about all we have seen and heard of the Good News. May the life of Brother André incite us to attest to that same legacy of love toward the world around us!

A testimony is composed of two linked elements: remembrance and its expression. To really testify to an event, one must first of all have witnessed it. One testifies to what one has seen and heard. In a testimony, remembrance is important. Expression — either by word or action — is an integral part of the testimony.

Our faith is rooted in a long line of deliverance and holiness, ever since Abraham until present-day saints. At the core of our Christian remembrance is Jesus risen from the dead. Through his teaching and his miracles, Jesus testified to God's goodness as a Father rich in mercy. And now it is our turn to be witnesses to the kingdom of God in our world. This is the mission that Jesus has entrusted to his disciples and one that the Church has pursued across the centuries, indeed, across the globe.

At Saint Joseph's Oratory, Brother André was a special witness his whole life long to the love of God for God's little ones, and the weak, and the poor, through his charism of healing.

The legacy that we received at our baptism we must live out openly to be able to truly testify.

Day
7

FRIDAY, MARCH 16

A Heritage in the Face of Disbelief



Such a contrast the Book of Wisdom presents us today in the liturgy. On one hand, see the unbelievers, proclaiming high and mighty that there is nothing after death. *“We were born just by chance. Afterwards, it will be as though we had never existed.”* Then, facing them, the just, believers who cannot affirm such a notion. And thus the unbelievers go: *“Let us lure the just into a trap, because they affront us; they repudiate our ideas; their very presence weighs down upon us.”*

In the passage from the Gospel according to John where they try to arrest Jesus, he, without presuming the title, can be seen as a just man, whose entire life and mission were defined as a service of “the One who sent me.”

“He was a just man.” Again that term. For the evangelist Matthew, that is enough to define who Joseph is. When, in a dream, this quiet man seemed to hear, “Do not fear to accept Mary and take good care of the one she will bring into the world,” he then demonstrated what he understood it to mean. A just man (somebody like Jesus) (somebody like the believer from the Book of Wisdom) who is able to conform his life to God’s will. Unbelief turned on its head.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, for you have raised up from among your people believers like Joseph — receptive enough to put their confidence in you without understanding everything at once; agreeable enough to surrender their plans for the future so that you might realize yours; adventuresome enough to allow for an unforeseen turn in their life, freeing themselves to accomplish what you have envisioned.

Day
8

SATURDAY, MARCH 17

A Heritage in the Face of Opposition



Opposition, death threats, persecution. The liturgy forces us to face what happens when it comes time to undergo one’s passion.

In the first reading, there is the prophet Jeremiah, misunderstood, abused — somebody they try to get rid of. *“Let us hack the tree at its root, let us tear it from the land of the living until they forget its very name.”*

In the Gospel according to John, there is Jesus. Put under the sentence of death by the leaders of the people, *“Some of them thought to arrest him, but no one put a hand on him.”* So he gets away this time, but only till later. Next time, these same opponents will have made up their minds. *“Better to have only one man die for all the people... .”* (John 11:50)

Opposition: Joseph had a similar experience. No, not about himself, but about the little one whom he had been given charge of. *“Herod is about to hunt down the child, to destroy him.”* (Matthew 2:13) Once again, he had to improvise immediately. *“Joseph got up, took the child and his mother... and went to Egypt.”*

Blessed are you, Lord our God. To accomplish your purposes, you were willing to rely on the cooperation of prophets and kings, but also upon common people and upon simple believers like Joseph. They had to be willing to make life sacrifices willy-nilly. They were confident enough in you, to stand firm in the face of contrary winds. They were fervent enough to throw themselves into an adventure, on your word only, without really knowing where it would lead them.





Day
9

SUNDAY, MARCH 18

A Heritage in the Face of Death



A hue and cry, tears, supplications to God. Today, the Letter to the Hebrews and John's narrative conjure up Gethsemane and the pain of the passion.

"Now, I am overthrown." Is it incomprehensible: "My soul is sad even unto death?" "Shall I say, 'Father, deliver me from this hour?'" Is that not the same as saying, "If it is possible, let this cup depart from me?" But no. "It is for this that I have come to this hour", is it not the same option as, "Let your will be done and not mine?" According to John, the cross cannot be isolated from that which follows it. It is the first movement in the elevation and the glorification of Jesus. Just like a process which culminates in a harvest, but begins with the burial and death of the grain.

At the beginning of his life, Jesus had to rely on Joseph, the man he considered his father (*Luke 3:23*) in order to be preserved from death. At the end of his life, facing death, Jesus had to rely on his Father. And the Father would free him from death.

Blessed are you, Lord our God for humble people like Joseph who endeavor to be in communion with your will without fuss or fantasy but with an honest simplicity of heart. Blessed are you for these humble people whose life reflects that your Kingdom is for the poor, as your son Jesus proclaimed, the one whom Nazareth called the son of the carpenter.



Photo: S. Martin

MICHEL GOURGUES has always been fascinated by the New Testament, and has made it his specialty. He teaches in the Faculty of Theology at the Dominican University College in Ottawa and as an invited professor at the Institut de pastorale des Dominicains in Montreal as well as at the École Biblique de Jerusalem. His time is well spent with academic activities of teaching, research, and publication. Honouring the great Dominican tradition of preaching, he is regularly invited to preach, to give conferences, and to lead Bible study groups announcing the Good News to diverse communities in the Church.



Photo: Archives OSJ

During the Novena and the Feast of Saint Joseph, let us pray with the words and the confidence of Saint Brother André,

“Go to Saint Joseph and pray; he will never let you down”.

“Pray Saint Joseph. He will always remain your father and your guide”.

“How good is God! See how Saint Joseph loves us!”

MARCH 10 TO 18
Novena to Saint Joseph

MONDAY, MARCH 19
Feast of Saint Joseph



Daily preaching
Living the Heritage
at the **14:00** and the **19:30** Masses

Other daily Masses
following the regular schedule
(page 23)

Solemn Masses in the Basilica

- 10:00** presided over by Most Rev. Pierre Morissette
Bishop of Saint-Jérôme
- 14:30** presided over by Most Rev. Christian Rodembourg, MSA
Bishop of Saint-Hyacinthe
- 19:30** presided over by Most Rev. Christian Lépine,
Archbishop of Montréal

English Masses in the Crypt Church

12:30 and 20:00



Saint Joseph is invoked on March 19, as the Noble Spouse of Mary. But anytime, we can pray to him with confidence as the *Model of Workers, Mainstay of Families, Guardian of the Pure in Heart, Terror of Demons, Our Consolation in Suffering, Hope of the Sick, Patron Saint of the Dying* and *Protector of the Church*.

Photo: Martin New

