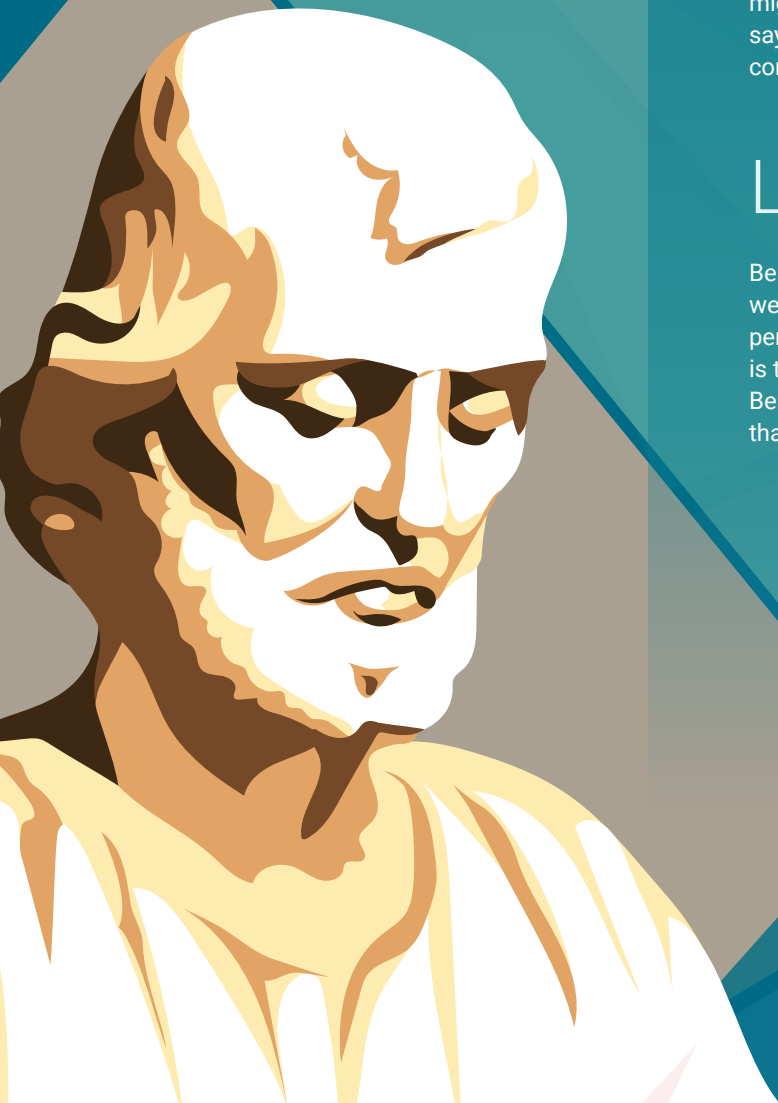


The ORATORY magazine would like to present the spiritual journey that will be proposed by the guest preachers at the next Novena of Saint Joseph, which will take place at Saint Joseph's Oratory from March 10 to 18, 2019.

A journey of nine days with three stopovers.



God Welcomes Us

Living with hope

One certainty emerges from the Word: not only does God welcome us, but he expects us. He longs for us. The path of life can sometimes be rough, abrasive, exhausting, but we are awaited. Saint Benedict, our companion for the first three days of the Novena, concluded his monastic rule with this beautiful affirmation: "You will succeed...!"

Living in faith

Don't wait to go to heaven for God to welcome you. The Word reveals to us the paths of life that will allow us to enter into His heart right now. "God became man so that in man you might discover God. When you welcome others you meet God," says the *Jerusalem Community Rule of Life*, which will be our companion for three days of our journey.

Living out of love

Being welcomed by God also means entering into God, welcoming His way of being, His mystery, His Love... "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." That is the goal! To become like God. To love as God loves. Saint Bernard, our companion for the last three days, reminds us that "The measure of God's love is love without measure."



God will welcome us at the end of the journey

> Living with hope

Photo: Marijke Desmet



**Dom André Laberge,
BENEDICTINE**

Originally from Beauharnois, André Laberge entered the Saint-Benoît-du-Lac Abbey in 1960 and was ordained in 1969. He studied music at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal from 1969 to 1972, and then at the Conservatoire régional de musique in Toulouse and in Amsterdam from 1977 to 1979. On his return to Quebec with his Benedictine brothers, he served as assistant master of novices and master of novices and cloistral prior until his appointment as third abbot of Saint-Benoît-du-Lac in 2006. In addition to his monastic duties, Dom Laberge contributed musically to the Abbey's liturgy as organist.



Hold fast to hope!

Before embarking on His public life, Jesus had an unusual encounter with the tempter. Three times, the devil used Scripture to tempt Him. Each time, Jesus put His adversary in his place by citing another passage of Scripture. With determination and subtlety, Jesus managed to resist the devil's manipulations.

Saint Joseph also experienced a form of temptation – to reject Mary, pregnant by the Holy Spirit although they were not yet living together. Joseph did not panic. He simply listened to the Angel of the Lord, who came in a dream to reassure him about the right attitude to take. And he brought Mary home.

Brother André had to face all kinds of trials during the completion of his grand project. He also had to endure the misunderstanding and criticism of those around him. But he held to the path he had taken. He had the profound conviction that his plan had come from God.

The example of Jesus using the Word of God as a shield against the devil should reassure us about our path. In our moments of weakness, doubt, temptation, tribulation, are we able to plunge ourselves into the Word of God? If we get into the habit of turning to it, we will have the comfort of finding it close to us, on our lips and in our hearts. Let us hold fast to hope.

SAINT JOSEPH, the just man, you who believed from the bottom of your heart, turn your kind gaze upon us. Teach us to look at our daily lives, our mission and the people around us with eyes of faith, a faith like yours: simple and open to the signs that our Father in heaven gives us.

DAY
2
MARCH
11

He will accept us on the basis of our love!

Jesus has prepared His disciples for the great day of Last Judgment.

The scene is impressive: the King, seated on His throne of glory, separates the good from the bad. To the good, whom he calls the “Blessed of my Father,” he shows that everything they have done during their lives for the starving, the poor, strangers and the needy, they have done for Him, Jesus.

The message is clear: we will be accepted on the basis of our love, on our way of putting into practice the second great commandment: “You will love your neighbour as yourself.” The poor, the little ones, they are not only the people whom we happen to meet. They are also those whose misery the media report to us. They are also the Christians around the world who suffer for their faith, who are scorned and persecuted because they belong to Christ. Do we pray for them?

We know very little about the daily life of Saint Joseph, but popular piety attributes to him virtues motivated by love. As for Saint Brother André, he spent his life tirelessly welcoming people struck by disease, infirmity, trials and tribulations of every sort. He could not help seeing Jesus in all those who came to him.

SAINT JOSEPH, you who guided the first steps of Jesus in life, teach us the path of love, of the faithful love of God, of the humble love of our neighbour.

DAY
3
MARCH
12

You shall know His mercy

Jesus taught his apostles to pray. He gave them the perfect prayer:

the Our Father. Perfect because of its filial devotion to God, whom we can call “Our Father.” Fraternal because it encourages us to forgive others as God forgives us.

Our days are often full of little “snags” in our dealings with other people. Forgiveness can sometimes be difficult. And we forget that the rule we use to measure others is the one by which we will be measured. While we are en route, and while there is still time, let us practice mercy in our views and thoughts about everyone. If we sow mercy, we will reap the divine mercy that is infinitely more benevolent and all-encompassing than ours.

We invoke Saint Joseph as “Patron of the Dying.” Popular piety likes to picture Jesus and Mary at Joseph’s deathbed. When they finish their journey, human beings need a comforting presence to help them prepare to meet the Lord. We pray today, Saint Joseph, for those who are at the end of their lives.

When Saint Brother André came before the Lord, he must have heard God say something like, “Come, man of mercy, enter into the joy of your Master!”

SAINT JOSEPH, look out for those who will die today. Guide them to the Son and ask him to receive them into His mercy.



God welcomes us today

> Living in faith

Photo: Marijke Desmet



Brother Antoine-Emmanuel, JERUSALEM COMMUNITY

Before becoming a monk "in the heart of the city, in the heart of God" in the Jerusalem Community in Paris, in 1989, Brother Antoine-Emmanuel was a telecommunications engineer. Ordained in 1994, he was named prior when the Strasbourg branch of the community was founded in 1995 and likewise in Florence in 1998. Originally from France, he made Quebec his home base in 2005 when he became the prior for the community in Montreal, established in the Plateau Mont-Royal. In 2016, he joined the team at the new House of Prayer in Mont-Saint-Hilaire. Since 2017, his mission land has been Italy, where he serves as prior for the community in Florence.

DAY
4
MARCH
13

Return to Him with all your heart!

Listening to the book of Jonah...which reveals our hidden anger before the mercy of God!

On the fourth day of the Novena, we are asked a question: are we ready to allow ourselves to be reset?

To what end? To reorient ourselves and truly rely on Jesus! To allow Jesus to become the centre, the foundation of our lives and of our joy... To allow ourselves to be welcomed by Him. To come back to God.

We are often like Jonah, who had trouble accepting God's infinite love for us all! We'd like a loyalty program, a sort of Aeroplan for heaven. But it doesn't work that way! We must rely, not on our own merits, but

on Jesus. This unleashes in us an amazing vitality: we become the Word of God that we truly are!

Am I ready to follow the example of Saint Joseph, who allowed himself to be reset – completely – in order to welcome Jesus into my life?

From the *Jerusalem Community* *Rule of Life:*

Love. Open your whole being to the love of God with which God first loved you. Anchor yourself forever in this certitude, the only one that gives meaning, strength and joy to your life: his love for you will never go away nor his covenant of peace with you ever be overthrown. He has engraved your name on the palms of his hands. (no. 1)

SAINT JOSEPH, you who allowed yourself to be unsettled, help us discover or rediscover a spirit of adaptability to become the Word of God that we are, each and every one, for the world today!



Knock on the door of His heart!

On this fifth day of our Novena, our companion is the beautiful Queen Esther. She will reach out to us through her solidarity with her people, her poverty of heart, her courage and her daring. "Come to my aid, Lord, because I am alone and I have no defender other than You."

Are we able, as she did, to bravely speak out and act for the good of people when they are threatened by a culture of death?

Jesus Himself will encourage us to ask, to seek, to knock. Thus we can enter into the compassion of God, and enter into the very Love of God. The Lord beckons to us from within His Passion — his "mad love" for the world. Shall we launch ourselves into such an adventure?

SAINT JOSEPH, you who left behind everything to save the life of the Child and the Mother, be our support so that we may put our lives at risk to protect our world from the culture of death.

From the Jerusalem Community Rule of Life:

"Do not be afraid of always going straight to the heart of things and, if necessary, of living at cross purposes with the world. Suffering will come, but take courage, Christ has overcome the world. Search out God's footsteps in daily life, seek his face in the unseen, fix your eye on the reward and, as though you saw the invisible prize, stand firm." (no. 63)



Hurry! Reconcile with your brother!

With Ezekiel, walk the ways of a full life in God. Its paths lie through your sister and your brother!

In this sixth day of our Novena, Ezekiel comes to encourage us to allow ourselves to be welcomed by the mercy of God, who takes pleasure in our conversion and our return to Him.

The Lord encourages us, awaits us, but at the same time He stops us at the threshold to His sanctuary. Do you long for life, the life of God? Yes! Then "Hurry!

Reconcile with your brother!" (Matthew 5:20-26) What is this Sanctuary where God welcomes us? The heart of your brother or your sister, especially one who causes you pain. And the most beautiful part is that the Lord is waiting for us in the face of a tiresome, easily offended, harsh brother or sister...in whom we can recognize the presence of Jesus, abandoned on the cross.

From the Jerusalem Community Rule of Life:

The search for God, the one thing necessary, takes place through human beings, the image of God the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Spirit. In this impermanent world God alone suffices: but God came into the world and he has put us in it too. Christ carried on an unceasing struggle with the world's outrages and yet with an ever deepening incarnation in the heart of everyday reality. Hence, in your monastic vocation, you are also called to follow and serve him and seek God's face exactly there where he is to be found: which is at the heart of the world, where you must continue fighting the same battle that he fought. (no. 136)

SAINT JOSEPH, you who were struck with awe gazing at Jesus and Mary, help us, too, feel a stroke of awe before each face we meet!



Photo: Nathalie Dumas

Welcome God

> Living out of love



Most Rev. Yvon Joseph Moreau, CISTERCIAN

Ordained on June 8, 1968, at the Diocese of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, Yvon Joseph Moreau entered the Cistercian Abbey of Oka in 1984. He was named abbot of the community in 1990. From 2002 to 2008, he guided his monastic brothers in the decision to move the community and build a new Abbey in Saint-Jean-de-Matha. In 2008, he was called to serve his original diocese as bishop. In March 2018, he returned to his brothers at the Val Notre-Dame Abbey. He is the author of three books on faith and prayer: *Offrir Dieu* (2012), *Respirer Dieu* (2014) and *Écouter Dieu* (2017), published by Médiaspaul.



Under the guise of your brother, He awaits your love!

Since the beginning of this Novena, our hearts have opened up to the generosity of God who welcomes us. Today, we are faced with a reversal of the situation; as if God were saying to us, “Yes, I welcome you with great joy. Now, in turn, you must welcome others, with the tenderness and love that you receive from me.”

Jesus takes this call to the extreme, even to loving our enemies. What Jesus is asking us, He Himself achieved to perfection, when He did not hate His executioners:

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

The secret of His forgiveness is in His gaze, turned toward the Father, “who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matthew 5:45b).

Truly, as Saint Bernard said, “The true measure of loving God is to love Him without measure”... and not to measure our love for our sisters and brothers!

SAINT JOSEPH, for us, you are the reflection of the Father’s love. With Mary and the Child, you endured a cold shoulder in Bethlehem and had to flee to Egypt, but you never allowed hatred to invade your heart. The love of God the Father and the Child had already transformed it. May this love also transform ours!



Enter into the mystery of prayer!

Jesus climbed the mountain to pray. We, too, have climbed the mountain to pray at the Oratory. For Jesus, the moment of prayer is a moment of enlightenment that transfigures Him: He finds comfort and reassurance in His Father. His prayer is not a parenthesis in His life: it is at the heart of His life and it illuminates the approaching hour of His Passion, which He has already announced to His disciples.

Today, the Father declares to us: "This is my Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to Him" (Luke 9:35). It is by listening to Jesus that we can welcome the mystery of prayer as listening to God and His desire for the salvation of us all.

We come to prayer here with many requests for ourselves or requests for people who have entrusted their suffering to us... These requests are the sign of our humanity, which needs healing, and the sign of our faith in the compassion of God and the intercession of Saint Joseph and Saint Brother André.

But it is up to us to discover another dimension of prayer: we must listen to Jesus to learn how to listen to the Father with Him and enter with Him into the mystery that has the power to transfigure us!

SAINT JOSEPH, in the secret of your faith and your prayer, you agreed to an unexpected mission. Following your example, we ask for a heart that listens, open to God's surprises!



Become like Him!

On this last day of the Novena, on the eve of the great Feast of Saint Joseph, Jesus reveals to us the extent to which we must welcome God into our lives: until we become like Him! This was God's plan from the moment of creation: "God said, *Let us make mankind — man and woman — in our image, in our likeness*" (Gen 1:26). People who know the Hebrew language say we should translate it as "toward our likeness," a likeness with God that must be developed throughout our lives... The dearest desire of our God's heart is for us to become like Him!

Jesus tells us how to achieve this: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). He clarifies: do not judge, do not condemn, forgive, and give generously. This was Jesus' own method, and to make it ours, we have to keep our eyes fixed on Him, Jesus,

and on His merciful face. "Everything in Him speaks of mercy. Nothing in Him is devoid of compassion," Pope Francis reminded us during the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (Bull no. 8). May we come to resemble Him!

SAINT JOSEPH, your fatherly gaze accompanied Jesus in His growth as the Son of the Father of Mercy. May our mutual gaze also help us grow in the beauty of our common humanity and our kindred spirits, to become a perfect image of God our Father!

PRAYER OF THE 2019 NOVENA

God Welcomes Us

*Lord,
in your love,
you welcomed Saint Brother André.*

*This poor humble servant
became the very image of your tenderness
to those who approached him.*

*Welcome us with open arms
like the Father who opened his arms
to enfold his prodigal son.*

*It was you who caused the little oratory,
put up on the mountainside
in honor of Saint Joseph,
to become a place of prayer and acceptance
where all are invited to experience
the immensity of your love.*

*Teach us to witness to your presence,
by respecting all whom we encounter
with sensitivity and compassion.*

*We ask this of you, our Father,
through your Son, in the Spirit.*

Amen.

Novena to Saint Joseph March 10 to 18

God Welcomes Us

Daily preaching during the Mass
(in French) at **2 p.m.** and **7:30 p.m.**
– March 12 and 14: **7:30 p.m.** (bilingual)

English Masses

Weekly: **12:15 p.m.**
Sunday, March 10 and 17: **11:15 a.m.**

Feast of Saint Joseph March 19

Solemn Masses in the Basilica

- 10 a.m. (bilingual)** Most Rev. Pierre Goudreault
Bishop of Sainte-Anne-
de-la-Pocatière
- 2:30 p.m.** Most Rev. Pierre-Olivier
Tremblay, Auxiliary Bishop
of Trois-Rivières
- 7:30 p.m.** Most Rev. Christian Lépine
Archbishop of Montréal

Masses in the Crypt Church

- In English:* **12:30 p.m.** and **8 p.m.**
In French: **7 a.m., 8 a.m., 9 a.m.,
11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m.**
In Spanish: **3 p.m.**