

Saint Joseph's Oratory, Montreal



The Saint Joseph's Oratory is a dream realized by Saint Brother André, the humble Brother of the Congregation of the Holy Cross who, in the depths of his heart, held a tremendous desire to build a house of prayer dedicated to Saint Joseph. On October 19, 1904, a tiny chapel was inaugurated. Very soon, the little chapel became inadequate to receive more visitors. Brother André's reputation expanded rapidly; stories of his cures spread far and wide and more and more pilgrims came to visit him. The situation called for the building of a larger church with a seating capacity of one thousand. The Crypt Church was completed in 1917. Begun in 1924, the Basilica was still roofless when Brother André died on January 6, 1937. This gigantic construction was built thanks to the efforts of thousands of workers. The inauguration as a Minor Basilica was held March 19, 1955, but the interior was not completed until 1967. Inaugurated in 1959, the beautiful garden of the Cross offers a space of silence as Brother André imagined.

Since 1904, the Oratory has risen above in the heart of Montreal, in the lush and historic Mount Royal district, this internationally renowned pilgrimage destination is steeped in history and culture. In 2004, on the 100th anniversary of its founding, it was declared a National Historic Site by the Canadian Government.

Modern developments

On October 19, 2004, the Oratory held its centennial. All the bells of all the churches on the island of Montreal were supposed to ring at 9:00 a.m., though not all churches participated. At 9:05 a.m., the basilica rang its bell in response and celebration.

In 2004, the Oratory was designated a National Historic Site of Canada on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.[5][6]

On 2 April 2004 Canada Post issued 'Saint Joseph's Oratory, Quebec' in the 2004 Tourist Attractions series. The stamp was designed by Catharine Bradbury & William Stewart based on a photograph by Bernard Brault. The 49¢ stamps are perforated kiss cut and were printed by Lowe-Martin Company Inc.