

LIVING WITH CHRIST THIS WEEK

Sunday, July 18: Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green
Monday 19: Ferial - green
Tuesday 20: Ferial - green
Wednesday 21: Ferial - green
Thursday 22: St. Mary Magdalene, disciple of the Lord - white
Friday 23: Ferial - green
Saturday 24: Ferial - green
Sunday 25: Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C) - green

Our Sainly and Historical Heritage



4. The Canadian Martyrs

I have always had a special devotion for the Canadian martyrs. When I was a Boy Scout, I belonged to the Isaac Jogues troop and for several years I said Sunday mass at the St. Charles Garnier Parish in Shawinigan. Today I live in the same area as did Fathers Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lallement following the founding of *Trois-Rivières* (1634).

The Canadian Martyrs, or as they are sometimes called, the North American Martyrs were eight Jesuit missionaries who worked in Huronia. Fathers Jean de Brébeuf (1649), Antoine Daniel (1649), Gabriel Lalement (1649), Charles Garnier (1649) and Noël Chabanel (1649) died on Canadian territory in the Midland Ontario region. Father Isaac Jogues (1646) and two volunteer laymen, René Goupil (1642) and Jean de La Lande (1649) died in the region of Auriesville, New York State. The eight were canonized in 1930 by Pope Pius XI, and proclaimed patron saints of Canada in 1940.

In the document, *Rélations des Jésuites*, Father Brébeuf summarized their mission: *When we met the Hurons, we resolved to preach publicly and to teach them the reason why we came to their country, which was not for their pelts, but to encounter the one true God and his Son, Jesus Christ, the universal Savior of our souls.* (free translation) Their liturgical feast day is September 26th in Canada and October 19th for the universal Church.

Several years ago I visited the Canadian Martyrs' National Sanctuary at Midland, near Georgian Bay. This great Gothic style church with its two steeples houses the Martyrs' reliquary. Behind the main altar is an imposing painting of the Jesuits. On the same site, we can also visit the grotto of Our Lady of the Hurons and follow the Way of the Cross.

Along the Wye River is a pathway leading to the tomb of Father Jean de Brébeuf who died in 1649. On the other side we find the reconstructed village of St. Mary of the Hurons. During his visit to Canada in 1984, Pope John Paul II visited the area and was honored with a First Nations' eagle feather.

Gilles Leblanc

Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli