



Novena of the  
founders of the  
Church of Quebec



P

ERSEVERE  
IN THE MISSION



2021

# Persevere in the mission

In these difficult times, we are collectively challenged in many ways. Now more than ever, we need glorious examples of perseverance to help us continue our journey with a gaze that rises above the hazards of life.

The men and women who founded the Church of Quebec, by their example, which shines through the centuries, open the way for us and encourage us to persevere in the mission which is ours today. These witnesses of the past teach us to stay focused on what is unchanging and essential: the presence and action of God in our joys as in our sorrows.

Then like now, it is a mission of love that is entrusted to us: to make Christ known to the world, as our predecessors did with faith and a missionary heart. Their great value of love, taught in the Gospels, and their unwavering faith made them persevere in the face of obstacles.

In this novena, dedicated to them, let us contemplate their faith, their hope and their love which helped them persevere in giving themselves entirely to the service of God and of their neighbour.

## Process of the Novena

Let us reflect day after day on the example of perseverance in the mission that was entrusted to them that our founders still give us today.

Guided by the video capsule of the day:

1. Let us put ourselves in the presence of God by asking Mary to accompany us and by praying as His Son has taught us:

**Hail Mary...**

**Our Father...**

2. Let us listen to the words of the founder of the day followed by the commentary by a bishop or a specialist.
3. Let us recite the diocesan prayer for the pastoral year 2020-2021.

\*To know more about de founders and foundresses:

<https://fondeurs.ecdq.org/en/home/>

# Day 1 : Friday April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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Feast of Saint Marie de l'Incarnation  
Solemn Mass at 5 p.m.  
Available live or recorded [here](#).

*Let us meditate on the example of  
Marie de l'Incarnation:  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

*“The day after the fire, the Governor and the Father Superior brought us to see that great furnace which no one yet dared approach [...] Rebuilding on these ruins seemed entirely unlikely [...] It was thought that the only thing we could do was to return to France [...] but not one of us showed any inclination to return to our former country.”*

(Letter 132, from Quebec, to a Jesuit Father, September 1651)

*“The decision was made that, without further delay, we had to rebuild on the original foundations. Since our courage had not yet been weakened [...], our vocations were as strong as ever, or even stronger, and the girls in this country, French and Indian, needed our help.”*

(Letter 133, from Quebec, to her son, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1651)

# Day 2 :

## Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

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*Let us meditate on the example of  
**François de Laval:**  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

*“The must strive to avoid both of the two extremes to be feared in those who work to convert souls: to hope too much or to despair too much. Those who hope too much are often the first to despair, faced with all the difficulties involved in the conversion of the infidels, which is more the work of God than the labor of Man.”*

(Instructions to missionaries, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1688)

# Day 3 :

## Sunday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

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Solemn Mass in English in honor of the founders at 8 am  
Available live or recorded on [Salt and Light](#).

Let us meditate with the **Pope Francis**:  
Video capsule: [here](#)

« (...) It is impossible to persevere in a fervent evangelization unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly. (...) It is not the same thing to try to build the world with his Gospel as to try to do so by our own lights. We know well that with Jesus life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. This is why we evangelize. (...)»

(Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, 266)

# Day 4 :

## Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

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*Let us meditate on the example of  
**Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin:**  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

*“I feel my heart disposed to do and to suffer whatever my good Master will please to send me: He knows my strengths, and I believe that he will allow nothing but for the best. The Crosses of Canada, which are quite frequent, have not diminished nor altered in any way my inner peace. I am not surprised to see them all around me. But I assure you [...] that when we have once placed our trust in the One who can do everything, we do not encounter so many difficulties; at least we don't feel them so much, or they seem softer. Anyway, I still feel my heart very happy and satisfied. I absolutely want to be with God and have nothing to heart but his service.”*

(Paul RAGUENEAU, La vie de la Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin, 1671. p.45)

# Day 5 :

## Thursday May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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*Let us meditate on the example of  
the Canadian Martyrs:  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

The perseverance of the Jesuits, as missionaries in New France, demanded a heroic moral strength. They clearly expressed what was at the core of their life: to serve the Lord Jesus “without dispersion, without reservation, without return.” From this determination came their perseverance – so they could say that they loved “as much as their heart could.”

Jean de Brébeuf sealed with his own blood his edifying promise to serve the Lord Jesus:

*“Lord Jesus, my Savior, you redeemed me by Your most precious blood and death. This is why I promise to give my life serving You, in the Society of Jesus, serving no other than You and for You only. I sign this promise with my own blood and hand, ready to sacrifice all of my life as willingly as I shed this drop of my blood.”*  
(Collection, p.5)

This commitment, made in 1631, is in some way concretized by the vow of martyrdom (1637-1639).

# Day 6 :

## Wednesday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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Let us meditate on the example of  
**Marie de l'Incarnation:**  
Video capsule: [here](#)

*“In critical circumstances, her advice was heeded, a bulwark against discouragement. [...] During that year (1660) [...] every inhabitant had to be ready for combat. The Iroquois had moved up the St. Lawrence and were threatening Quebec. [...] The Ursuline monastery was abandoned and put under siege. Marie remained there alone with three companions to provide ammunition to the soldiers. [...] At times, everything seemed to point to the loss of the colony. Marie identified with all these miseries, these difficulties, this general anxiety. [...] But, as seen in her letters, she never despaired. It was perhaps due to a few kind-hearted women like herself, and to her Ursulines sisters, and to the Augustinian Hospital Nuns, in their resolution to stay, in spite of everything, that Quebec survived so many calamities!*

*(Dom Albert JAMET, Écrits spirituels et historiques [Spiritual and Historical Writings], Volume 1, General Introduction, p. 37)*

# Day 7 : Tuesday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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Feast of Saint François de Laval  
Solemn Mass at 5 p.m.  
Available live or recorded [here](#).

*Let us meditate on the example of  
François de Laval:  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

*“Everything done by the hand of God is admirably useful to us, though we may not see its effects immediately. For many years now, Providence has guided this Church, and us with it, along spiritual and temporal paths that are both hard and crucifying. Provided that His holy will be done, this is of no import.”*

(Letter to his friend Henri-Marie Boudon, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1677)

# Day 8 :

## Friday May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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*Let us meditate on the example of  
the Canadian Martyrs:  
Video capsule: [here](#)*

Unlimited audacity, faith and perseverance are the qualities that Brébeuf found necessary for “*those of the Society who come to New France should be impelled to it by a special and very forcible call; persons who are dead to themselves and to the world; men truly apostolic, ho seek God alone, and the salvation of souls, who love the Cross (...) who do not spare themselves (...) who have Godlike hearts, all filled with God; who are like little John the Baptists, crying through these deserts and forests like voices from God, which summon all (...) to acknowledge Jesus Christ; in fine let them be men whose sole satisfaction is in God (...) But it belongs to God alone to choose whom he will use, and whom he favors by taking them into New France, to make saints of them. Saint Francis Xavier said that there was an island in the Orient whish was quite capable of making a person lose his sight, by crying from excessive joy of the heart; I know not if our New France resembles this island, but we know from experience that, if anyone here gives himself up in earnest to God, he runs the risk of losing his sight, his life, his all, and with great joy (...).*”  
(The Jesuit Relations, 1634-1636)

# Day 9 : Saturday May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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Feast of Blessed Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin

Solemn Mass at 10:30 am.

Available live or recorded [here](#).

*Let us meditate on the example of  
Marie-Catherine de Saint-Augustin:*

*Video capsule: [here](#)*

Marie-Catherine of Saint-Augustin was in poor health and the very difficult living conditions in Canada worsened her condition. In spite of everything, nothing could make her abandon the mission that the Lord had entrusted to her in this country. The superior of the monastery of Bayeux, to whom she was attached, having one day known of her infirmities, illnesses and what she suffered, insisted that she returns to France, saying that she would serve a lot in their community. Marie-Catherine's biographer recounts her reaction to this proposition:

*“This generous one refused it absolutely, telling this dear friend that she was attached to the cross of Canada, by three nails from which she would never come off. The first, the will of God; the second, the salvation of souls; and the third, her vocation in this country, and the vow she had made to die there; and she added that even when all the nuns wanted to return to France, provided that it was allowed, she would remain alone in Canada to consume her life there in the service of the poor Indians and the sick of the country.”*

(Paul RAGUENEAU, La vie de la Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin, 1671. p.48)

# DIOCESAN PRAYER FOR THE PASTORAL YEAR 2020-2021

God our Father, we thank You for giving us Saint François de Laval as first shepherd of Your Church in Canada.

As the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our diocese draws near, we strive to continue the Mission by following in the footsteps of this beloved shepherd, who went forth and met all people, with audacity and resilience, to preach the Gospel in this country.

Through the intercession of this great witness of the Good News of your Son, Jesus Christ, inspire us with his faith and charity, and guide us on the path of a missionary and pastoral renewal that will bear fruit for our families and for all communities.

Inspire every pastor and every baptized man and woman who are committed in the Church for Our Times and teach us all to accomplish the Mission entrusted to us as one.

Help us become worthy instruments of God so that we may bring forth the Light of the Gospel in this world.

Amen