

PRESS RELEASE

Sent to the Atikamekw Fundraising gathering for “Mission chez nous” to help aboriginal communities

Montreal, October 4, 2019 — The Most Rev. Christian Lépine, Archbishop of Montreal, is pleased to invite you to meet Jacques Laliberté, an Oblate sent by the Church for nearly 25 years to the Atikamekw in Haute-Mauricie. This event held for the benefit of *Mission chez nous* will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m., at the *Institut de pastorale des Dominicains'* auditorium, 2715 Côte Sainte-Catherine Road, in Montreal. A \$25 contribution would be appreciated. Seat reservations at [Fundraising gathering "Baptized and sent: 25 years among the Atikamekw"](#). Tax receipts will be issued.

Who are these Atikamekw whose portion of the land was flooded by the Gouin dam at the beginning of the 20th century, whose forests brought greater prosperity to La Tuque, Shawinigan, Trois-Rivières and other communities? What are their joys, hopes and fears? Father Laliberté, allied and pastor to the Atikamekw, will give a compelling testimony to the vitality of these people he has come to know and love.

With the Extraordinary Missionary Month and the conclusion of the Synod of the Amazon, this is a favourable moment to take stock of the mission among the aboriginal people here. Who are the Catholic Atikamekw, and how do these women and men live their faith? How are we to understand the renewal of aboriginal spiritual beliefs? How is this mission transformed by listening to the calls from Spirit? Who is in charge of pastoral care in these communities today? This meeting will provide a forum to discuss, reflect, share and celebrate.

All proceeds will go to Mission chez nous, founded 25 years ago by the Assembly of Quebec Catholic Bishops to raise funds for Christian missions in aboriginal communities. Though some communities cover entirely their pastoral costs, others can only cover them in part: they face huge challenges and need our support. In 2018, the annual campaign helped raise \$280,000 from groups and individuals. A sum of \$245,000 was allotted to 21 projects in various dioceses in Quebec, among them Joliette, Chicoutimi for the Atikamekw, Baie-Comeau for the Innus and the Naskapis; and Amos for the Anishanabegs, Eeyou and Nuvavik communities.

The diocesan Social Action Ministry Office, which planned this fundraising event,

takes part of the rich urban dynamic of the Aboriginals living in Montreal. They raise awareness on colonial history and First Nations' situation, notably with the blanket exercise for reconciliation.

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For more information or an interview, please contact:

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