



PRESS RELEASE **For immediate release**

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MONTREAL TO RECEIVE THE RELIC OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

Montreal, January 23, 2018 – The Archdiocese of the Catholic Church of Montreal invites the faithful to participate in the veneration of the relic of St. Francis Xavier on January 28 and 29 in Montreal, as part of a 14-city Canadian tour. All events are free and open to the public.

“Throughout the cities where the relic will be on display, close to 100,000 people are expected to view the relic arm, the same number of people it is believed St. Francis Xavier baptized. Such a relic provides a tangible experience of God’s grace, and the faithful will be able to seek the intercession of St. Francis Xavier, given his closeness to God,” explained the Archbishop of Montreal, Christian Lépine.

The relic pilgrimage has been organized through the collaborative effort of the Archdiocese of Ottawa, the Canadian Jesuits and Catholic Christian Outreach and is a gift for the Church in Canada as the nation’s 150th anniversary year draws to a close.

History - Introducing St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier is considered by many to be the greatest evangelizer since St. Paul. He was born in 1506 into Spanish nobility. In 1525, he enrolled at the University of Paris. His roommate was none other than St. Ignatius of Loyola, who became his spiritual mentor. Through the perseverance of St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier experienced a profound conversion and discerned his call to the priesthood. They, and a handful of friends, were inspired to found a new religious community: the Society of Jesus, commonly known as the “Jesuits.”

In 1540, at a moment’s notice, St. Francis Xavier was asked to replace another Jesuit on their mission to Asia. He did not hesitate to follow God’s will. He had a gift for languages; through hard work and an excellent memory, he could converse in the native language of those to whom he went. He made it a priority to form local disciples, equipping them to continue evangelizing and ministering to the inhabitants of the regions he visited. On December 3, 1552, St. Francis Xavier died on Shangchuan Island within sight of his next mission, mainland China. He was only 46 years old.

About the relic

This relic is the right forearm and hand of St. Francis Xavier. It is estimated he baptized more than 100,000 people with this arm. It is permanently displayed in a reliquary at the Church of the Gesù in Rome, the Jesuit mother church. The remainder of his body is entombed in Goa, India.

His arm as well as the rest of his body remain preserved, not having been affected by the ravages of decomposition. St. Francis Xavier died 465 years ago.

Place: Mary Queen of the World Cathedral

1085 de la Cathédrale Street, Montreal, H3B 2V3
(Bonaventure Metro)

[Location](#)

Schedule

Sunday, January 28, 2018

5 p.m. – Mass

From 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. - Public Veneration

Monday, January 29, 2018

From 11 a.m. to 12 noon - Public Veneration

12:10 p.m. - Mass

From 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - Public Veneration

5 p.m. - Mass

From 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. - Public Veneration

**Starting at 7 p.m. - Relic Talk: Life of St. Francis Xavier and the
Three Graces, given by Archbishop Christian Lépine**

10 p.m. - Closing Prayer, Litany of St. Francis Xavier

The relics will visit other venues in Montreal on January 30th. For a complete schedule of events, details on the life of Saint Francis Xavier, and information on the practice of veneration are available at: www.cco.ca/relic.

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For more information or an interview, please contact:

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