



Fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris

***Statement of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Montreal,
Archbishop Christian Lépine***

Montreal, April 15, 2019 – It is with much sorrow that we learned of the hazardous fire ravaging Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. This damaging fire has evoked tremendous dismay among the people in our cities and within the Archdiocese of Montreal, where the construction of our own Notre-Dame Basilica was inspired by its sister church in Paris. We stand in genuine sympathy with the citizens and the faithful of Paris, and with all those affected by this tragedy in France and throughout the world.

This tragedy has occurred at the beginning of Holy Week. At Easter, there are numerous Catholic liturgical celebrations: the Chrism Mass, which always takes place in the cathedral, is a gathering for all priests in a diocese; Holy Thursday commemorates the Lord's Last Supper; Good Friday recalls Jesus' passion and death; the Easter Vigil, when numerous baptisms are celebrated; and Easter Sunday, which celebrates the Lord's resurrection.

This grand 850-year-old Gothic cathedral is imbued with symbolic meaning for millions of people. By its towering height, it evokes the desire to seek God; by its vastness, it invites people to assemble in great numbers; by its history, it is a tangible sign of the collaboration of generations and of enduring hope.

At this time, it is the Word of God that has the power to calm our hearts and to draw us closer in solidarity. In my name and in the name of the entire Archdiocese of Montreal, I offer our prayers and extend our heartfelt thoughts to the faithful and the citizens of Paris as they live through this difficult trial.

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Source:

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