Pray this Summer with the Saints of Canada for the 150th Anniversary

This summer, as we celebrate Canada’s 150th Anniversary we will pray with a number of men and women who have in some particular way, shaped the life of the Church in Canada. Some gave their lives to ensure that the Good News be heard throughout North America. Others, out of steadfast faith and profound love dedicated their lives to the service of their brothers and sisters, whom very often were among the most underprivileged. These extraordinary people are lights on the journey and examples of holiness and charity that Catholics can follow. See more on Canadian declared saints, blessed or venerable over the years at (www.cccb.ca)

The Canadian Martyrs
Also known as the North American Martyrs, these eight Jesuit missionaries from Sainte-Marie among the Hurons or what is now southern Ontario worked with the Hurons in the colonial days of New France. They were killed during warfare between the Iroquois and the Huron. They were canonized in 1930 and their feast is celebrated in Canada on September 26. We Pray: Dear Saints Isaac Jogues, Jean de Brébeuf, Noël Chabanel, Gabriel Lalemant, Antoine Daniel, Charles Garnier, (“donnés” laymen) René Goupil and Jean de la Lande, pray for the people of this beautiful country. You are the first canonized saints of the United States and Canada. You know our country and its needs. You were aware of the risks of being present to people who were themselves in danger and still you stayed. Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may risk getting to know one another to grow in love of God and each other. Amen.

Saint Marie of the Incarnation (1599-1672):
Saint Marie de l’Incarnation was born in France in 1599. She married when she was 17 years old, but her husband died two years later, Free to pursue her religious inclinations after her husband’s death, Marie retreated to a secluded life and joined the Ursuline Order in 1633. Six years later, she boarded the Saint Joseph and journeyed to New France, where she was crucial to the spread of Catholicism. Marie and the other Ursuline nuns founded the first girls’ school in the New World. They taught the girls the basics of the faith, including Catechetics, prayers, and hymns. She died in 1672 and her feast day is April 30. We pray: Dear Saint Marie, you helped build a welcoming place where everyone could find counsel as well as material help. You wrote, “Those worries never diverted my attention from God who was my constant preoccupation. On the contrary, I was strengthened because everything I did was in a spirit of charity and not for my personal profit.” Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may live more fully God’s spirit of charity and let go of any material demands that divide us. Amen.
Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620-1700):
Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys was born in 1620 in France. In 1653 she left France and journeyed to what is present day Montreal. It was here she founded an order of religious women, the Congregation of Notre-Dame and started the first public school. Marguerite dedicated her life to educating young girls, including the poor and Native American, about virtue, literature, and faith. She was canonized in 1982 and her feast is January 12.
We pray: Dear Saint Marguerite, you and your companions taught catechism and basics of literature, as well as virtue, etiquette and the love of work. You wrote, “It is true that what I have always wanted most, and most ardently desire, is for the great teaching of the love of God above all things and the love of one’s neighbour as one would be loved, to be engraved on all hearts.” Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may be good neighbours to all nations. Amen.

Saint François de Laval (1623-1708):
St. Francois de Laval was born in 1623 in France and entered the local Jesuit college at the age of eight. He spent the next decade studying theology and became a priest in 1647. He was appointed the first bishop of New France when he was 36 and “is admired for his pastoral work among the Aboriginal Peoples and the settlers of New France, and for trying to defend Native People from being exploited by merchants and governors” (CCCB). He was canonized in 2014 and his feast day is May 6.
We pray: Dear Saint Francois, you were Québec’s first shepherd, a good and brave man who was a key person in our country’s social and religious history. You travelled on foot, by canoe and wearing snowshoes to visit and comfort many people. Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may be inspired and never tire to find ways to live out acts of mutual forgiveness in homes and communities everywhere. Amen.

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680):
Saint Kateri Tekakwitha was born in 1656 in New York State. When she was four, her parents and younger brother died in a smallpox epidemic. Her eyes were hyper-sensitive to light, so people named you “Tekakwitha”, meaning “she who gropes her way” or “she who bumps into things.” Kateri always remembered her mother’s faith, and joined the Catholic Church as a teenager. She was persecuted by her tribe for her faith, and eventually left her village to join a Catholic community in Canada. She died there at age 24 and was canonized in 2012. Kateri Tekakwitha is the first Native American to be canonized a saint. She is also known as the Lily of the Mohawks. Her feast day is July 14.
We pray: Dear Saint Kateri, you were filled with faith, spending hours in prayer and making crosses out of twigs even though you were made fun of and received threats for your belief. Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may be gentle witnesses of God’s goodness in times of unfairness and see with eyes of faith God’s love in all situations. Amen.
Saint Marguerite d'Youville (1701-1771):
Saint Marguerite d’Youville was born in 1701 at Varennes, Quebec. She was married for eight years and had six children, (four died in infancy and two sons later became priests) before becoming a widow in 1730. She founded an order of religious women, the Sisters of Charity, commonly known as the Grey Nuns. With the Grey Nuns, she established hospitals in Montreal and across Canada. In 1871 the Grey Nuns founded the St. Boniface Hospital, located at the fork of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Marguerite died in 1771 and was canonized in 1990. Her feast is October 16.
We pray: Dear Saint Marguerite, you are known as Mother of the Poor. You knew and understood poverty from your own life experiences and by caring for those most in need (wounded, suffering, abandoned, poor, prisoners, women and children). Within the community, you wanted “perfect union, with one heart and one soul, always considerate and supportive of each other in our weakness, knowing that we need a greater love to bear our own.” Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may supportive in working towards making our country free of poverty by always being truly in perfect union. Amen.

Saint Brother André of Montreal (1845-1937):
Saint André (Alfred Bessette) was born in 1845 in St-Gregoire-d’Iberville, Quebec, and was orphaned when he was twelve years old. He joined the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1870, and was given the job of door-keeper at Notre Dame College in Cote-des-Neiges, Quebec. His great confidence and pious devotion to Saint Joseph inspired him to recommend the Saint’s devotion to all those who were afflicted in various ways. In 1904 he began a campaign to erect a chapel to honour St. Joseph, construction of St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montreal officially began in 1924. Saint Andre was canonized in 2010 and his feast is January 6.
We pray: Dear Saint Brother André, you did not know how to read or write, but you knew how to be friendly and how to pray. As a door-keeper you turned to God through Saint Joseph praying for so many people that you met each day. As you were dying you are recorded as saying, “God is good! How beautiful and powerful he is! He must be beautiful, because the human soul, which is a reflection of God’s beauty, is so beautiful!”. Intercede for us, so that all Canadian citizens may find the beauty of the human soul in each other and respond each day in friendliness and prayer. Amen.

Prepared by Koreen Hrizai, Archdiocese of Saint Boniface, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada June 2017
Reference Source: