

Celebrating Multiculturalism July 1st, 2015



To mark Canada Day, the Diocesan Missions Committee of Saint Boniface proposed a multicultural day of celebration filled with discovery, in front of the Saint Boniface Cathedral.

If all of Canada celebrates July 1st, the Cathedral of Saint Boniface also joined in a day which was aimed at celebrating all the different cultures rooted in the city and in Canada.

“Canada welcomed us with open arms,” explains Sister Anne Adoukpe. Even now that we are Canadians, we keep our culture, it’s who we are; we want to share it, to enrich this country. We praise God for this.”

A Mass was celebrated at 10:30 AM for the opening of a unique and colourful celebration which was held from 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM. One of the participants, Wilgis Agossa, explains: “This celebration was very special, for me it was a beautiful communion of different cultures and the Mass really reflected this. The fact that it was held on Canada Day made it even more special.”



All the communities were involved in this celebration during which the Prayer Intentions were presented in 17 different languages! Confirming this, Sister Anne, said: “As we celebrated, we were one heart, one soul, a wall crumbled and we marched towards unity at the centre of the diocese.”



After the Offering collection, which Archbishop Albert LeGatt explained would be used to assist new refugees, a gigantic buffet was organized in front of the Cathedral, always with the idea of sharing of cultures within the Christian faith. There were flavours from Asian to African dishes, along with Canadian specialties and everyone tasted a bit of foreign places, along with smiles and discussions.

“It is a beautiful feast and we have to take full advantage of it,” emphasizes Claude. “It’s important to have a taste of all the dishes from different cultures, they are all so unique. Even though our palate is not familiar with certain flavours! I have lived in Winnipeg since 1999 and I feel comfortable here, the people smile, share, discuss, much more so than in other Canadian cities I have known.”

For Sister Anne and the day's organizers, the idea of sharing is primordial. "We had suggested to those who wished to cook, that they prepare something from their culture as an 'act of thanksgiving, of sharing and of donating."



The afternoon was punctuated by traditional dances in colourful costumes which rivaled each other. Eyes were filled with the spectacular dances of little Korean girls, as well as Université de Saint-Boniface students, and Vietnamese dancers

. The dancers expressed a heartfelt joy for being present: "We're so happy to be here, it's really cool to be able to share our culture with people who do not know about it, we thank the organizers for giving us the opportunity to do this." The speeches were given in English, in French and even in Spanish, as the community joined in perfect rhythm to the music of the Philippines and applauded in a most heart-warming way.



As a sign of the day's success, Sister Anne and all the organizers are already looking to the future, and a further meeting of all the flavours of Winnipeg: "I hope that in the future, with this kind of day, the communities will learn to love one another around God, understanding that each has something to offer."

