

St. Peter's Parish History Update 2008 – 2017

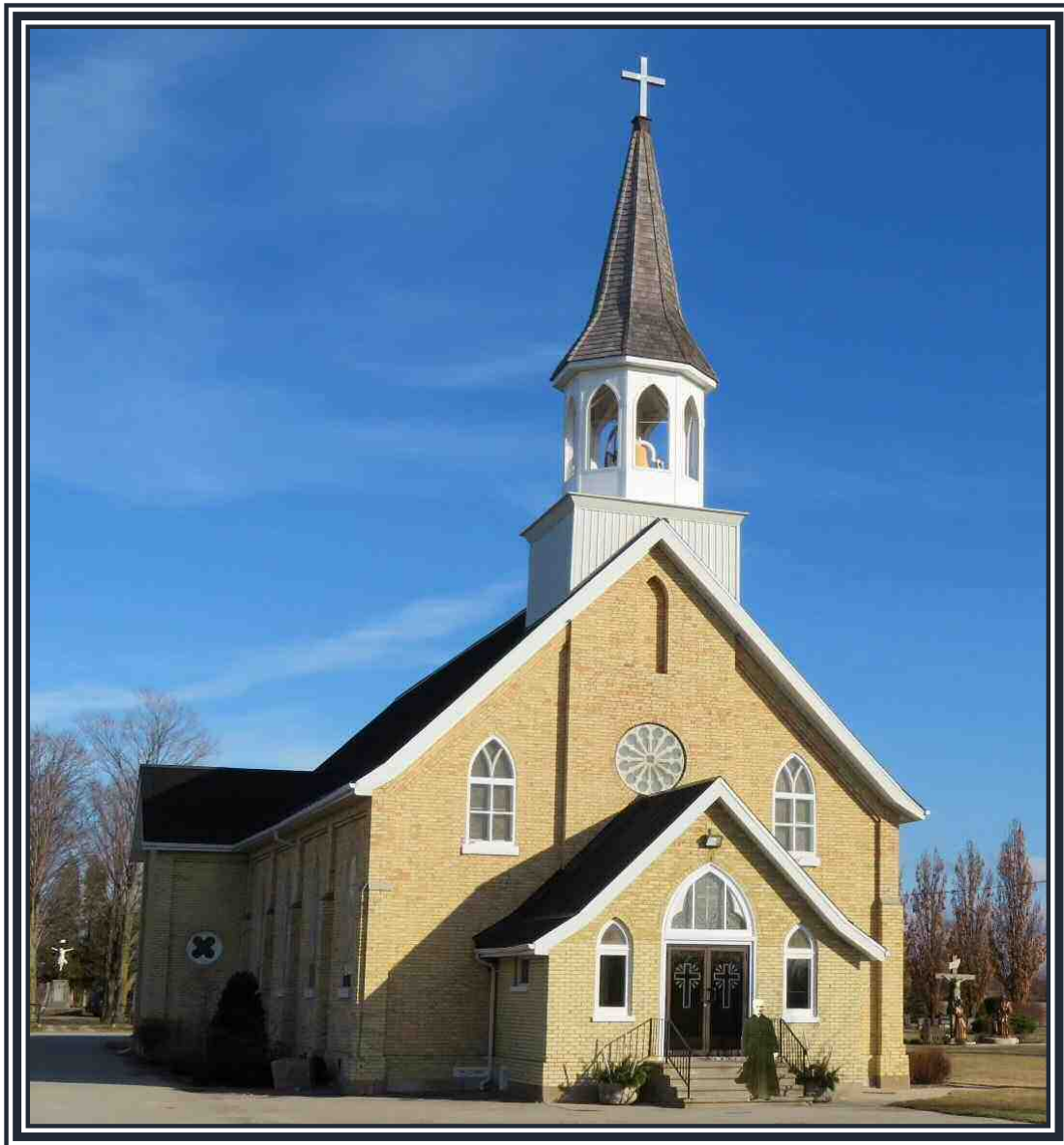


Photo courtesy of Loretta Ayotte

The Saint André 100 Committee, 2017

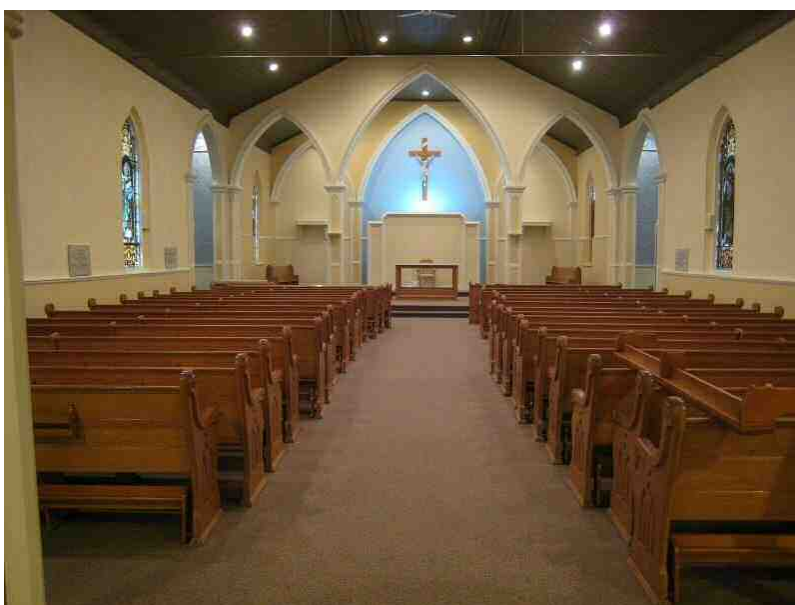
Compiled by Elaine (Jeffrey) Coxon

St. Peter's Parish History Update 2008 – 2017



Rev. Fr. Peter Keller was pastor with Rev. Fr. Peter Poel as associate pastor in 2008. The St. Peter's restoration program was completed by *Jeffrey Bros. Construction Ltd.* from March to May 2008, under Dave Durand's supervision. The work included soda blasting, new carpet, and the painting of the walls

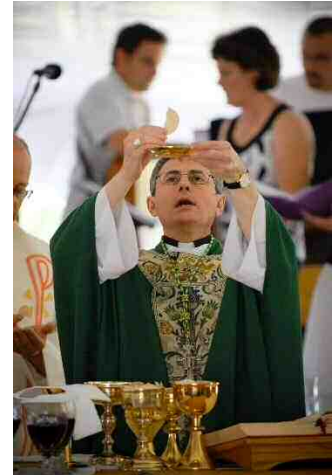
and ceiling.



Newly renovated, St. Peter's Church, St. Joseph, 2008

Several statues were taken to London to Joe Valerio for repairs and restoration. He noted that the statues were over 90 years old and priceless, in that statues of that calibre were no longer being made. Volunteers took part in the "Parish Grounds Improvement Bee," held on May 29, 2008 to beautify the church grounds.

A committee was formed and preparations were made for the July 12-13, 2008 135th Anniversary Celebration, of the building of St. Peter's church. Saturday, July 12th featured an evening of local entertainment beginning at 7 p.m. On Sunday, an outdoor Mass was celebrated by Bishop Ronald Fabbro and followed by a lunch. Over 500 people registered for the event. The celebration provided an opportunity for attendees to view historical displays, renew old friendships, and visit with family and friends. Activities were available for the children. The booklet, "St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, St Joseph, Ontario: In celebration of the 135th Anniversary 1929-July 13, 2008" updated the parish's history.



[L to R] Rev. Fr. Peter Keller, His Excellency Bishop Ronald Fabbro and Rev. Fr. Richard Charrette





Rev. Fr. Peter Keller and Bishop Ronald Fabbro hold the key as the crowd awaits entry into the newly renovated church. Photographer, Sandra Regier captured the weekend activities.



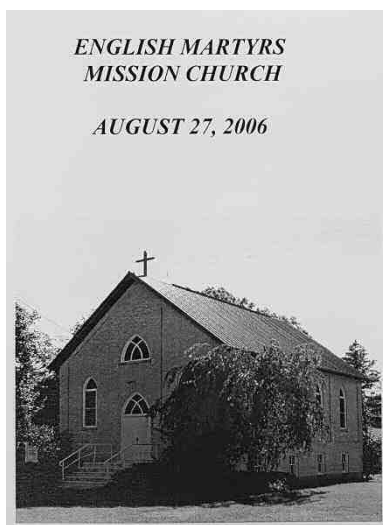
A variety of entertainment was available throughout the celebration.





Members of the planning committee included: Dennis and Lydia Ducharme, Phil and Patty LaPorte, Dianne and Mike Miller, Martha and Ken Mungar, Dianne and Mark Tucker, Larry Langan, Rev. Fr. P. Keller and Rev. Fr. P. Poel. "Memories of the 135th Anniversary Celebration", a photo CD was produced and made available to parishioners after the event.

The Cemetery Board purchased a columbarium for cremated remains. Each niche holds two urns.

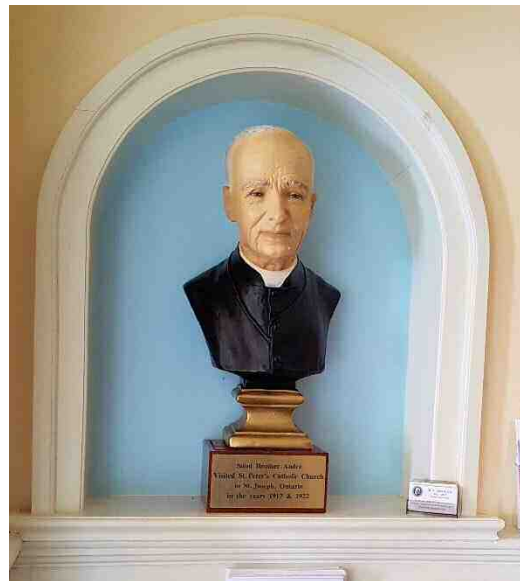


The English Martyrs church in Bayfield was closed in 2006. The sale of the building was finalized at the end of 2008 and part of the revenue was used to repay the diocesan loan for St. Peter's restoration program. The balance of the money was set aside for future repairs and future restorations to the church hall.

Rev. Fr. Peter Poel, associate pastor, left the parish at the end of September. As part of re-clustering, October 5th, 2008, Immaculate Heart of Mary church in Grand Bend was paired with Sacred Heart church in Parkhill, leaving St. Peter's and St. Boniface together, with Rev. Fr. Peter Keller as pastor.

Since St. Brother André's earliest visit, many parishioners have felt a close bond with this humble man. Each week, at the Tuesday Mass, the "Devotions to St. Joseph and St. Brother André" are said.

A bust of St. Brother André, donated by Bette and Richard Bedard, is proudly displayed in the church to commemorate his visits.



Inscription: "Saint Brother André Visited St. Peter's Catholic Church in St. Joseph, Ontario in the years 1917 & 1922."

2009

In June 2009, the statue of Mary, originally from École Ste Marie was taken to Joe Valerio in London, for restoration.

St. Peter's Saturday Night Choir was nominated as one of the top three choirs in the area at the Grand Bend Winter Festival.

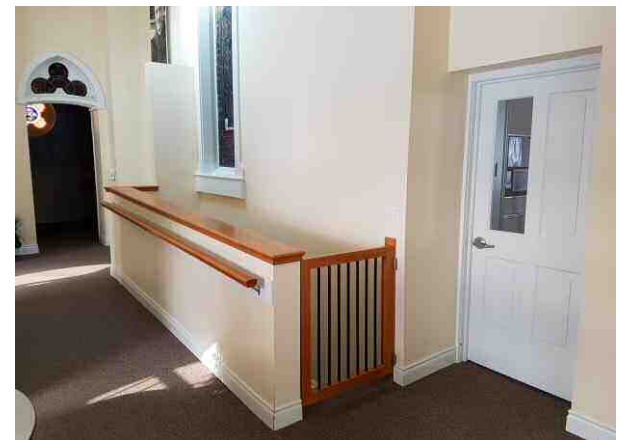
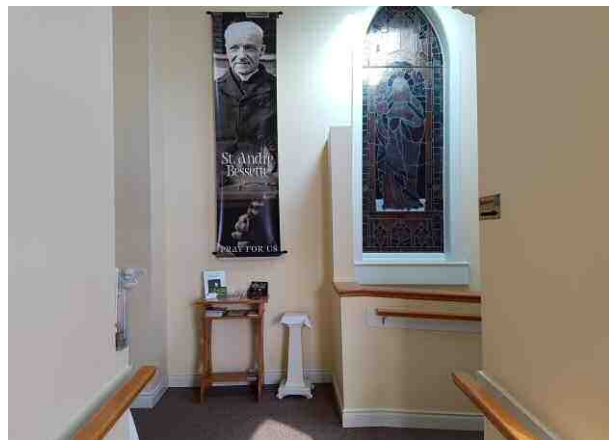
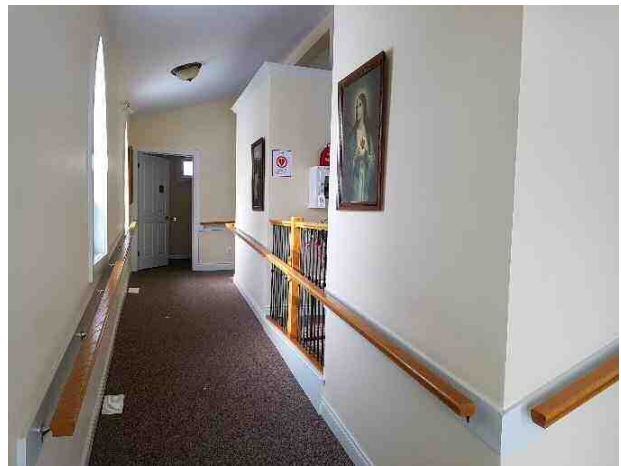
2010



Rev. Fr. Graham Keep

June of 2010 marked the arrival of Rev. Fr. Graham Keep. Brother André was canonized in October and arrangements were made so parishioners could come together in the Narthex at St. Boniface, to view it on television.

The parking area at the front of the church was removed and the entire lot repaved. A new entrance and washroom were built at the back of the church and the parking lot was extended with added wheelchair access.



Water taps were installed outside to facilitate the maintenance of the flower beds in the cemetery and on church grounds.

2011

There was an increase in grave interment rates in January 2011.

St. Peter's Parish was the first stop for the Visitation of the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André from April 29 to May 2, 2011.



The St. Brother André artifacts owned by Marc Cantin were on display.

"The Friends of St. André", a committee of interested parishioners, held an "idea" meeting to discuss the creation of the "St. André Healing Garden" on the south side of the church in October of 2011.

2012

In 2012, The St. Joseph Historical society purchased 15 new tables for St. Peter's parish hall.

The building committee, led by Don Oesch included John Grellette, Ken Mungar, Pat Jeffrey, Peter Jeffrey, and Mark Tucker (retired). Between April 30 and May 12, a number of volunteers came together and prepared and painted the walls of the church hall.

Anthony Hartman became Secretary Treasurer of St. Peter's Cemetery Board, replacing Phil and Patty Laporte. A social was held, in appreciation of their many years of service.



The St. Joseph and Area Historical Society sponsored "Grave Matters", a dramatic presentation focusing on several families whose ancestors were among the original settlers. The performances were held in the cemetery.

2013

The bell tower was reinforced by *Jeffrey Bros. Construction Ltd.*

A special Mass was held on Monday, July 8, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. to mark the 140th Anniversary of the building of the church. A coffee social was held the day following the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

The parish was once again blessed with a visitation of the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André in 2013.



Rev. Bishop Ronald Fabbro officiated at Mass.

David Johnston arrived at St. Peter's and St. Boniface parishes in June of 2013 as a seminarian intern. By October, he had achieved the Ministry of Acolyte, which gave him the ability to serve at the altar and assist the priest and deacon.

2014

All of the kneelers at St. Peter's were removed and sent away for restoration. Groups of fifteen to twenty units were removed and re-installed each time to permit continued use of the church.



Michael Frieters, Ken Mungar, Mark Tucker, Ken Forler, Francis Hartman

A new organization, Christian Men of Bluewater (CMOB) was formed in 2014 to support and equip men to stand up and live the life they were called to by their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The group met regularly and focussed their discussions around specific study programs.

Members of this group were also actively involved in parish events. The group dissolved at the end of 2017.

A dedication ceremony of the St. Brother André Healing Garden was held, August 9, 2014. Rev. Fr. Louis Mousseau O.F.M. CAP, a descendant of this parish community, presided at the dedication. An outdoor Mass, followed by a pulled pork and beans meal marked the occasion.



St. André Healing Garden

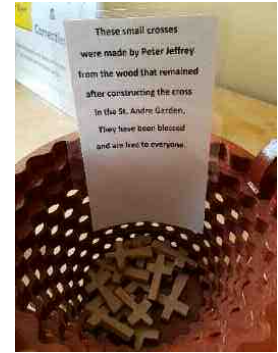
Three birch trees were planted beside the Healing Garden Stone in recognition of the name given to the community by its first settlers – Pointe aux Bouleaux / Birch Point. Between October 2012 and December 2014,



the Friends of St. André committee were able to complete and pay in full, the cost of the St. André Healing Garden. The large cross in the garden was built by parishioner, Peter Jeffrey. Using remnants of the wood,

he also fashioned small crosses, which were blessed and offered to parishioners and visitors.

The Kneeling St. Brother André statue was sent away to be restored. It and the statue of the Sacred Heart were given new bases by *Al Dunn Masonry*.



The statue of St. Brother André praying to St. Joseph and the child Jesus was commissioned by Joe Cantin in 1955, with the financial support of his fellow parishioners.



The walkway was added in 2017.

Farewell parties were held for Rev. Fr. Graham Keep and David Johnston who were transferred to St. Thomas, Ontario in June. One such event was held at the Bluewater Rest Home.



FR: Yvonne Jeffrey, Priscilla Brandt, Patsy Rau
BR: Virginia Denomme, Rev. Fr. Graham Keep, Rev. David Johnston



Rev. Fr. Matt George

On October 13, 2014 Rev. Fr. Matthew George was officially installed as pastor of St. Boniface and St. Peter's parishes by the Episcopal Vicar, Rev. Fr. Phillip Joseph at the 7:00 p.m. Mass.

In November the Building Committee postponed the installation of storm windows until the spring of 2015 because of ongoing scheduling problems with the window

company. A group of volunteers decided to build and install temporary storm units in order to protect the leaded glass over the winter months.

2015

A task force for the Future of Pastoral Care in the Diocese was formed.



Major renovations were made in the hall. The upgrades to the church hall included a renovated kitchen, a larger refrigerator, new cupboards and sink, a fold down counter and service window. Parishioners were asked to vote on whether or not to keep the stage. Forty-one were in favour of its removal and two wanted it kept. The stage was removed. Two new exterior doors were also installed.

Mass was celebrated on the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul and parishioners were given the opportunity to be blessed with the parish's relic of St. Peter.

The original certificates of authenticity for the relics owned by St. Peter's Parish are found at the Diocesan Archives. Copies have been included in the Appendix.

a) The relic of the "True Cross" belonged to Rev. Monsignor William Bourdeau and at the time of his death it was to remain in the parish where he was stationed.

b) St. Peter the Apostle

- c) St. Anne
- d) St. Brother André – The stand was made by Peter Jeffrey.
- e) St. Clare and St. Prosper

New storm windows were installed in the church.
Bluewater Plumbing & Heating installed a backup sump pump system in the church basement.



St. Brother André Relic

Dianne Tucker photographed the monuments in the cemetery and posted them online on the *CanadaGenWeb's Cemetery Project* website.

<http://cemetery.canadagenweb.org/>

David Johnston was ordained to the transitional diaconate by Bishop Joseph Dabrowski at St. Peter's on June 1st, 2015.

2016

Cracks in the narthex wall and ceiling were repaired and repainted.

The Muhammed(s), a family of Syrian refugees were sponsored by the parish and welcomed to the community in February 2016. A number of volunteers helped the family adjust to their new home and country.

Rev. Fr. David Johnston was ordained to the priesthood on April 23, 2016 at St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica in London, Ontario.

A social was held to celebrate Rev. Fr. Matt George's, 20th Anniversary to the priesthood.

On August 7, 2016 the newly installed corpus on the cross in the St. André Healing Garden was blessed. The event was followed by a social in the church hall.

The reorganization of parishes into Family Groups by 2025 was introduced to parishioners in September.

2017

Central air conditioning was installed in the church by *Bluewater Plumbing & Heating*. And a new 100 amp electrical service was installed in the church hall by *Ray's Electric*.



St. André 100 Website
<http://standre100.weebly.com>

2017 marked the 100th anniversary of St. Brother André's first visit to St. Peter's Parish in October of 1917. Under the leadership of Phil LaPorte, several volunteers organized monthly events and historical displays to acknowledge and commemorate St. André's presence in the

parish. Other members of the committee included: Patty LaPorte, Loretta Ayotte, Charlene Oesch, Nancy Robison-Jardine, Elaine Ducharme, Anthony Hartman, Pauline Cantin and Elaine Coxon



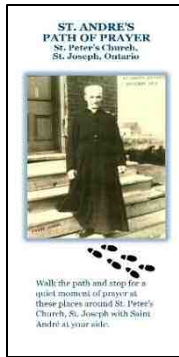
Families living in the parish in 1917 were honoured in a Family Posters display in the church hall. Descendants of these families who entered into religious life were also given special recognition. Monthly events consisted of "Coffee Sunday" style socials each

focussing on a theme related to the life of St. André. Students attending St. Boniface School participated by preparing art work for the hall. Music teacher, Christa Ducharme and several of her students entertained parishioners with French Canadian folk songs in November.

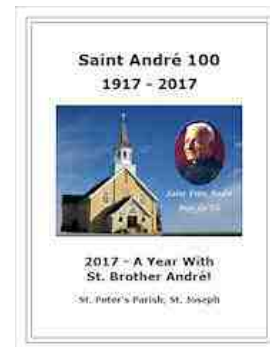
The two major events for the year were the *Parish Reunion Barbecue* in August and the *Visit of the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André* in October. Marc and Pauline Cantin, with the support of Rev. Fr. Patrick Beneteau of the Diocese of London, brought the Major Reliquary to area schools, the Bluewater Rest Home and St. Peter's parish.

Major additions to the church grounds in 2017 included the creation of the St. André Rosary Garden and a new walkway to the Sacred Heart and The Kneeling St. Brother André statues. A duplicate of the Kneeling St. Brother André statue was donated in 2017 and installed at the back of the Rosary Garden. The statue was restored by Peter and Pat Jeffrey and its base was made by Tony and Phil LaPorte.





"*St. André's Path of Prayer*", a pamphlet of the major features of the church grounds, and a postcard of the St. André Rosary Garden were produced as souvenirs. A booklet, "*2017 – A Year with St. Brother André*", highlighting the year's activities, was also completed. The family folders, a digital



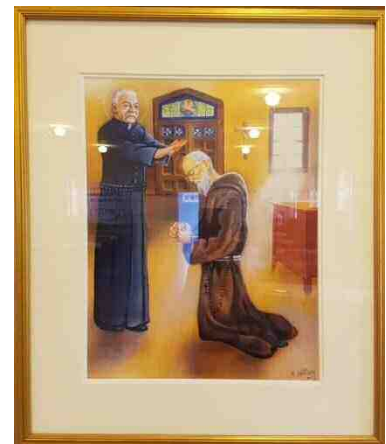
backup of the photos and other information collected, have been placed in the church hall filing cabinet. The "St. André 100 Website" provides continued access to all of the photos and information gathered by the committee. <http://standre100.weebly.com>

Rev. Fr. Louis Mousseau, on behalf of the Capuchin Brothers donated this picture of Rev. Fr. Solanus Casey receiving a blessing from St. Brother André Bessette – "The Day ... Two Future Modern Day



[L to R] Rev. Fr. Mousseau and Don Oesch

Saints Met". David Hartline, in his September 2010 article for *The*



American Catholic website explained that since neither could speak the other's language, "they did the only thing they could do in one language; they blessed each other in Latin, the language of the Church." Hartline concluded,

"Both men came into this world with little fanfare, and despite their healing gifts they would continue living that way their entire lives. However, because of their humility God gave them a gift that the richest among us would be envious of having, the gift of healing. Because of this, they may have taught us all that humility and obedience, while frowned upon in the go-go world of the 21st century, is one of God's greatest joys." (*The American Catholic*, 2010)

Appendix

- 1) History of the Catholic Women's League
- 2) History of the Knights of Columbus
- 3) Copy of certificate of authenticity – The True Cross
- 4) Copy of certificate of authenticity - St. Peter the Apostle
- 5) Letter of certificate of authenticity – St. Anne
- 6) Copy of certificate and letters of authenticity – St. Brother André
- 7) Photo of St. Clare and St. Prosper relic owned by St. Peter's, St. Joseph
- 8) Booklet: *2017 – A Year with St. Brother André – Celebrating 100 years since St. Brother André's first visit to St. Peter's Parish, St. Joseph, in 1917*
- 8) Postcard: *St. André Rosary Garden*
- 9) Brochure: *Path of Prayer*
- 10) St. Joseph Oratory Magazine Articles - *Throughout the Wide World* and *De par le vaste monde*
- 11) Booklet: *St. Brother André Among Us* – Photos, stories of miraculous healings and parishioners' memories from the time St. Brother André was among us.

History of St. Peter's Catholic Women's League

St. Peter's Catholic Women's League began in May of 1950, #1267 when the charter was received. The Spiritual Director was Monsignor Bourdeau, the president was Mrs. Louise (Remi) Denomme, and the secretary was Mrs. Esther (Alvin) Rau. The membership fee was \$0.50 and pins could be ordered from head office for \$1.00. Their mission statement states that the Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) is a national organization, rooted in Gospel values, calling its member to holiness through service to the people of God. The ladies wanted to serve their parish by raising funds for parish work and to support charitable groups in the area and in the world.

The parish hall was originally the responsibility of the CWL. The ladies paid for all repairs to the building and purchased the fridge, chairs, ceiling fans, and paid to have the wooden dividing doors made into 16 tables for use in the hall. They were responsible for cleaning the hall and the church until 1990 when people were hired to clean once a month. They supplied the church with flowers for special occasions, especially Easter and Christmas. In order to raise funds, bingos, card parties, dances, bake sales, bazaars, parish picnics, penny sales and "Get Togethers" with surrounding parishes



[L to R] Elaine Jeffrey and Martha Mungar

were held. The first quilt was donated by Mrs. Josephine (William) Ducharme. Beginning in 1966, the

ladies attended the Zurich Bean Festival to sell pies, baked goods, and

tickets on their quilts. This continued until 2003, when they no longer had a booth, but continued with their quilt raffles until 2016. Support was given to CNIB, Christmas candy and parties for school children, gifts and money to young women entering a religious order, and visiting shut-ins. For many years, money was given to the highest academic boy and girl graduating from Grade 8. This later developed into giving rosaries to all graduating students, which continues today.

Christmas treats were given to the École Ste. Marie students until the school closed. In more recent years, funding has been directed to Right to Life memberships, to Tony Milledge for Brother Bob, Catholic Church Extension Society, Development and Peace, Huron Day Center for the Homebound, Christmas Bureau (Family and Children Services), Sisters of the Precious Blood, Kids Help Phone, and Blessings Community Store in Zurich. Since 1981, they have sponsored the Save a Family Plan through the Diocese. Support was also given to the refugee family in 1979, and more recently in 2015-16.

As time progressed, the community changed, resulting in fewer parishioners. Discussions were held in 1974 about closing, and in 1989 the group became inactive for two years. With renewed interest, the women started again in 1990. Membership has ranged from 50 to 70 ladies.

The ladies were kept busy serving funeral receptions, ordination receptions, priests' anniversary receptions, priests' days of reflection, Knights of Columbus dinner meetings, first communion and confirmation receptions. The ladies have enjoyed pilgrimages to St. Marys, Midland and Merlin, fun nights in surrounding parishes, conventions in Windsor, Sarnia, Stratford

and London; interdenominational World Day of Prayer in local community churches and Christmas Wine and Cheese Parties.



[L to R] Patty LaPorte, Barb Coker, Afra VanWonderen. Dianne Tschirhart, Martha Mungar, Hilda Gerger, Elizabeth Cloran, Elaine Jeffrey

This organization has been the centre of parish life for many women and life-long friendships have been made through working together, supporting each other in good and bad times, and attempting to make this world a better place for everyone.

(Prepared by Patty LaPorte, 2017)

History of the Knights of Columbus

Men from this area, interested in belonging to the Knights of Columbus organization, historically became members of the Fr. Stephen Eckert Council in Seaforth, Ontario. On January 7, 1985, a new council was formed in St. Boniface's Parish. The first Grand Knight was Mike Rau and there were 30 members. Some men from St. Peter's Parish joined the newly formed St. Boniface Council while others remained with the Seaforth group.

Members of the St. Boniface Council see their role as being a support to their parish. They volunteer where needed and organize a variety of events: monthly card parties, Euchre tournaments, a Ladies' Night Dinner and a Mother's Day Breakfast to name a few. Some of the proceeds are used to support the youth ministry in the parish, provide bursaries for students at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and gifts for St. Boniface's Grade 8 graduating class. Money has also been raised for both parishes' building funds and to help send parishioners to El Salvador to build houses for the poor. Junior and senior elementary hockey teams are sponsored each year for the annual Knights of Columbus tournament in Seaforth. The Council also provides much needed support for other worthwhile causes.

(Source: Dwayne LaPorte)



Relic of the True Cross – The original certificate is in the Diocese of London Archives.

N. B. This Relic of the True Cross
belongs to Rev. W. Bourdeau.
It is to be left to the Church
where I am stationed at my death.
W. B.

"N. B. This Relic of the True Cross belongs to Rev. W. Bourdeau. It is to be left to the Church where I am stationed at my death. W B." – written on the original certificate



<p>F R A N C I S C U S EP.ŪS OSTIENSIS S. R. E. CARDINALIS</p> <p>Sacri Collegii Sacr. Patriarchalis Basilicae SS.MI D.NI N.RI PAPAE ROMANAE CURIAE EIUSQUE</p>		<p>MISERATIONE DIVINA ET TUSCULANUS MARCHETTI SELVAGGIANI</p> <p>Decanus Lateranensis Archipresbyter VICARIUS GENERALIS DISTRICTUS IUDEX ORDINARIUS ETC.</p>
<p>Universis et singulis praesentes litteras inspecturis fidem facimus ac testamur, quod Nos ad maiorem Omnipotentis Dei gloriam suorumque Sanctorum venerationem recognovimus sacras particulas <i>ex cruce S. Petri Apostoli</i></p> <hr/> <p>quas ex authenticis locis extractas reverenter collocavimus in <i>hunc metallicum</i> crystallo munita, bene clausa et funiculo serico coloris rubri colligata, ac sigillo nostro signata, easque tradidimus cum facultate apud se retinendi, extra Urbem transmittendi et publicae fidelium venerationi exponendi. Monemus autem fideles in quorum manus hae sacrae reliquiae nunc vel in posterum venturae sunt, nullo modo licere eas vendere, neque cum iis rebus quae mercimonii speciem praeseferant, commutare.</p> <p>In quorum fidem has litteras testimoniales manu nostra subscriptas nostroque sigillo firmatas per infrascriptum Sacrarum Reliquiarum Custodem expediri mandavimus.</p> <p>Romae ex Aedibus nostris die <i>15</i> mensis <i>Mayis</i> Anni MCML.</p> <p style="text-align: right; color: blue;"><i>+ Oloing de la Roche</i></p>		
<p>REG. N. 188/50</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Tip. Pio X - Via Etruschi 7 - Roma</p>		

Relic of St. Peter the Apostle – The original certificate is in the Diocese of London Archives.



Bishop's House
90 Central Avenue
London, Ontario, Canada

June 30 19 52

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

By these presents we the undersigned Bishop of London having duly considered the matter certify that the Relic of St Anne for many years in the possession of St Peter's Church, St Joseph's Ontario, is undoubtedly authentic and may therefore be used for public veneration ~~the~~ the aforesaid Church or anywhere else within the confines of this diocese. The case is intact the glass is unbroken, the thread and the original episcopal seal are undamaged and the memorandum enclosed "S. Anne M.B.V." is still quite legible.

At the request of the pastor of the parish this document is hereby issued to replace the original document of authentication which has in the course of years been accidentally destroyed or mislaid.

With every good wish I remain

Devotedly yours in Christ,

+ John C. Cody
Bishop of London.

Relic of St. Anne – The original letter is in the Diocese of London Archives.



CONGREGATIO A SANCTA CRUCE

Universis et singulis, praesentes litteras inspecturis, fidem facimus et testamur, Nos ex authenticis locis extraxisse particulas panni perfusi sanguine Beati FRATIS ANDREAE, laici professi Congregationis a Sancta Cruce, easque collocasse in theca metallica, circularis formae, unico crystallo munita, bene clausa, funiculo serico rubri coloris colligata, et sigillo nostro obsignata.

In quorum fidem has litteras testimoniales, a Nobis subscriptas sigilloque nostro munitas, concedimus.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus Postulationis, Via Aurelia, 290, die 23 maii, 1982.

Angelus Mitri, O.M.I.
Postulator Generalis

Relic of St. Brother André – The original certificate is in the Diocese of London Archives.



TRANSLATION

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS

I hereby certify the following to all who may read this document.

I have extracted from authentic sources bits of cloth that was used to stanch the blood of Blessed Brother André, a lay religious of the Congregation of Holy Cross, and I have mounted them in a circular-shaped reliquary, faced with glass on the one side, well closed, tied with a red silk thread, and with my seal affixed.

In witness thereof, I issue this certificate bearing my signature and seal.

Given at Rome, on May the 23rd 1982, from the headquarters of the Postulation, 290 Via Aurelia.

Angelo Mitri, O.M.I.
Postulator General

St. Joseph's Oratory
3800 Queen Mary, Montreal, Canada H3V 1H6 Tel.: (514) 733-8211

Relic of St. Brother André – The original letter is in the Diocese of London Archives.



TRADUCTION

(Certificat d'authenticité)

CONGREGATION DE SAINTE-CROIX

Je certifie ce qui suit à toutes les personnes qui liront ce document. J'ai extrait de lieux authentiques des parcelles d'étoffe imbibées du sang du Bienheureux Frère André, profès laïc de la Congrégation de Sainte-Croix, et je les ai placées dans une boîte métallique de forme circulaire, munie d'un seul verre, bien fermée, liée avec une ficelle de soie de couleur rouge, et cachetée de mon sceau.

Donné à Rome, le 23 mai 1982, en la maison de la Postulation, au numéro 290 de la Via Aurelia.

Angelo Mitri, O.M.I.
Postulateur général

L'Oratoire Saint-Joseph
3800 Reine-Marie, Montréal, Canada H3V 1H6 Tél.: (514) 733-8211

Relic of St. Brother André – The original letter is in the Diocese of London Archives.



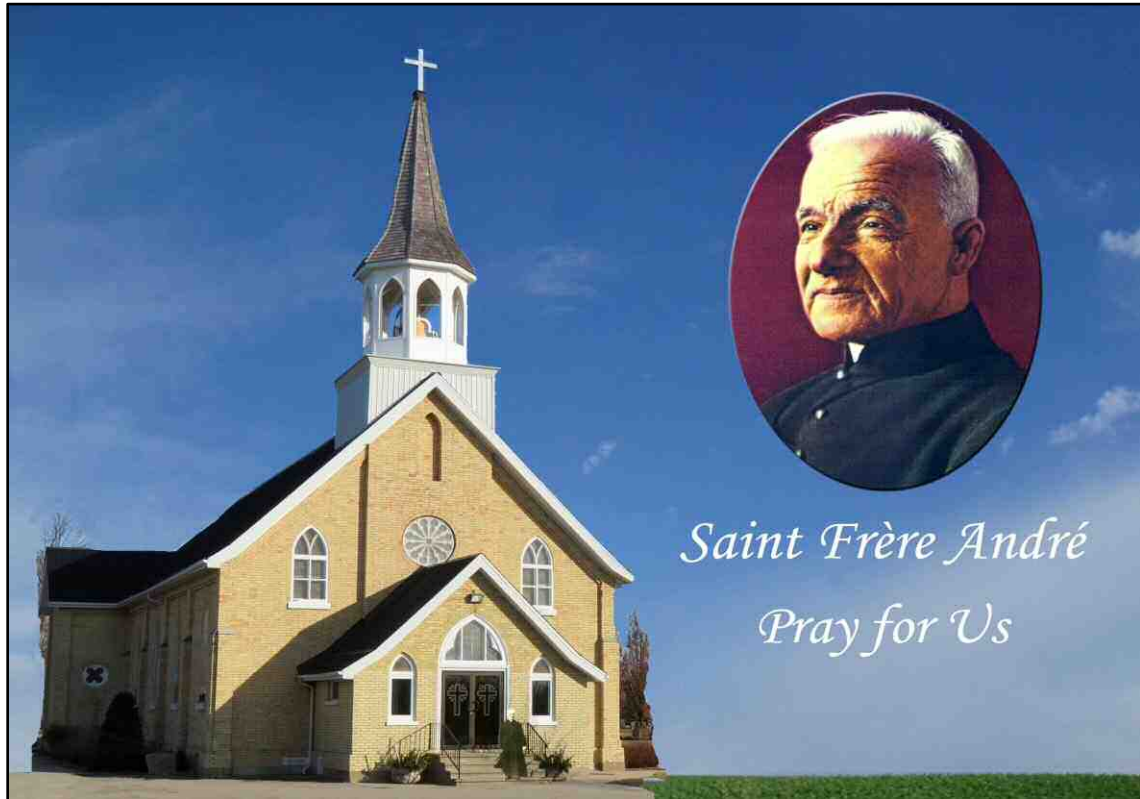
Consecrated by R. Rev. J. A. Roney, D. P.
August 12th, 1955

S. Clari M. (St. Clare)
S. Prosperi M. (St. Prosper)

This relic belongs to St. Peters Parish.



2017 - A Year with St. Brother André



**Celebrating 100 years since St. Brother
André's first visit to St. Peter's Parish,
St. Joseph, in 1917.**

The Saint André 100 Committee, 2017
Compiled by Elaine (Jeffrey) Coxon

January 2017 – Feast Day of St. Brother André

The first monthly event, "Coffee Sunday," was held on January 15th in honour of St. Brother André's Feast Day. Attendees were made aware of the upcoming "St. Brother André 100" celebrations. A small display was set up and Phil LaPorte explained to parishioners what they could expect over the coming year and how they could help.



Phil LaPorte, chairman of the "St. Brother André 100" Planning Committee

Members of the St. Brother André 100 Planning Committee include: Phil LaPorte, chairperson, Patty LaPorte, Loretta Ayotte, Charlene Oesch, Nancy Robison-Jardine, Elaine Ducharme, Anthony Hartman, Pauline Cantin, Elaine Coxon.



February 2017 – Vocation Sunday

Parishioners enjoyed a chili lunch on Sunday, February 19, 2017. The theme for February was vocations and Rev. Fr. Patrick Beneteau, Director of Vocations, from the Diocese of London, delivered the homily. Some of the young men from our diocese spoke of their vocation journey. Jacob Quinlan, from St. Joseph Parish in Chatham and currently living in the newly formed "Discernment House" for the Diocese of London, gave his vocation testimony along with T.J. Vandermeer, first-year seminarian, and Deacon David Avila of the Hamilton Diocese, who will be ordained to the priesthood this May. Monique Hartman organized this month's event. Students from St. Boniface created St. Brother André posters, which were displayed throughout the church and hall.



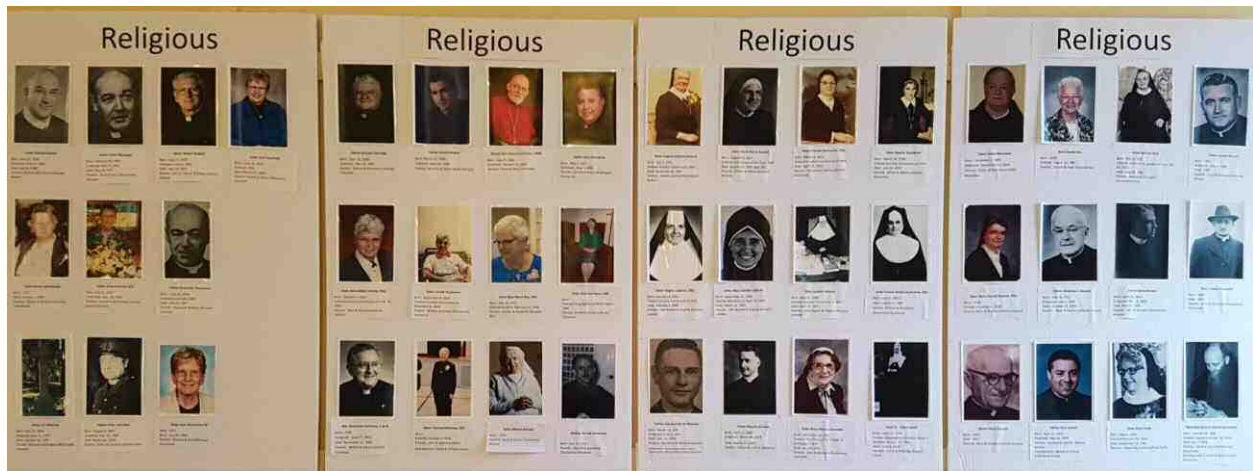
Phil LaPorte, Rev. Fr. Peter Keller, Jacob Quinlan, T.J. Vandermeer, Deacon David Avila



Rev. Fr. Matthew George, Sr. Bernadette LaPorte, Rev. Fr. Richard Charrette

The planning committee gathered photos and biographical information about the early parishioners' descendants who entered religious life. The information was mounted on posters and displayed in the parish hall. As of this writing, 46 people have been identified.

Celebrating Past, Present and Future Vocations



Additional biographical information can be found at
<http://standre100.weebly.com/>

March 2017 – The Feast of St. Joseph

In honour of St. Brother André's most beloved saint, St. Joseph, March was a celebration of woodworkers and carpenters.



Rev. Fr. Matthew George bestowed a blessing upon the carpenters during the 11:00 a.m. mass, which was followed by a social in the church hall.

April 2017 – Celebrating married couples and families

April's theme was in recognition of marriage and families. Couples



celebrating an anniversary that was a multiple of five were invited to the 11:00 a.m. Mass where they were given a blessing. Mass was followed by a social in the church hall where cake and non-alcoholic

champagne were served.

April also marked the completion of the family folders and posters displayed in the church hall. A family poster was made for each couple living in the community in 1917. The posters included photos of their families, as well as the families of some of their ancestors and descendants.



May 2017 – Celebrating first responders and medical field workers



A silent auction was held in order to raise money. All donated items were hand crafted by members of the parish. A wide variety of woodworking items were donated, as well as paintings, stone work, crochet items and quilts.

Parishioners were generous in their donations and bids. The money raised



was used to cover expenses and the balance has been set aside for the continued maintenance of the Rosary Garden.

June 2017 – Celebrating Farmers



Antique farm equipment was displayed in the church.

July - Blessing of the St. André Rosary Garden

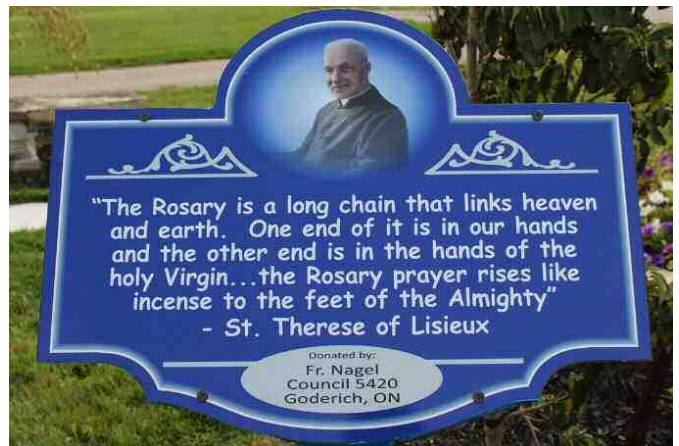




The Cross Surrounded by Flowers



Blessing of the Rosary Garden



Installation of the Rosary "Beads"



A duplicate of the Kneeling St. Brother André statue, originally owned by Joseph Cantin was donated and installed directly behind the Rosary Garden in 2017.

August – Family Reunion



The procession included a Knights of Columbus Honour Guard.



OFM Cap Bishop John Corriveau, of Nelson, B.C., a native of this area, officiated.



Rev. Fr. Richard Charrette, a native of this parish, spoke of the impact that St. Brother André's visits had on the faith of this community.

A Bell Tower View of the 11:00 a.m. Outdoor Mass
Photo, courtesy of Brandon Langford, a descendant of Jean-Baptiste LaPorte



Rev. Fr. Matthew George offering attendees an opportunity to venerate the parish's relic of St. Brother André.

From (l-r): Rev. Fr. Louis Mousseau, a descendant of this parish community, former pastor Rev. Fr. Peter Keller, OFM Cap Bishop John Corriveau, of Nelson, B.C., a native of this parish, present pastor Rev. Fr. Matthew George and another son of the parish, Rev. Fr. Richard Charrette.



Hamburgers and hot dogs were served by members of the parish's CMOB (Christian Men of Bluewater) organization.



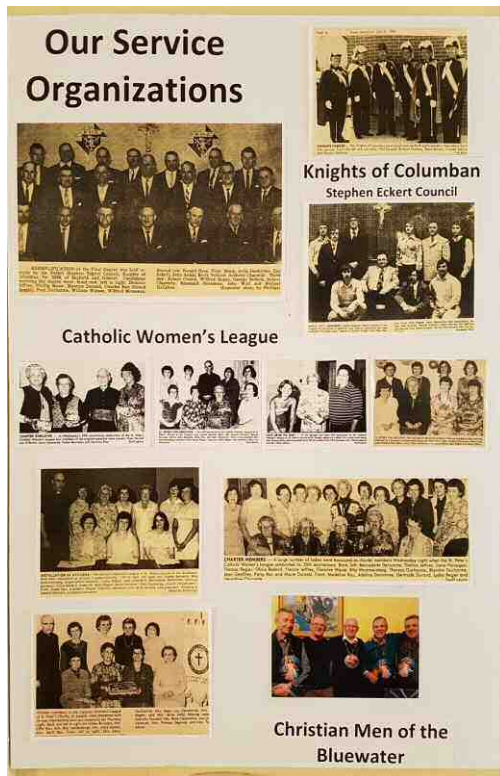
Attendees ate outdoors and explored the church grounds and the family poster and historical displays in the parish hall.



Pictured above is Marc Cantin, a great-grandson of Narcisse Cantin, family historian and guardian of some of the St. Brother André memorabilia owned by the Cantin family. He and his wife Pauline have been instrumental in arranging and bringing the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André to this parish, area schools, and other parishes in the Diocese on several occasions.

September - Celebrating our CWL, K of C and CMOB Members Goodbye Summer Visitors - Back to School

September celebrated members past and present, of the Catholic Women's League, The Knights of Columbus and the Christian Men of Bluewater service organizations in this parish. September also said goodbye to our summer population and welcomed students and teachers back to school.



October – Anniversary of St. Brother André's 1917 Visit

October marked the 100th anniversary of St. Brother André's 1917 visit to St. Peter's Parish, St. Joseph.



On Thursday, October 19, the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André was brought to St. Boniface Church in Zurich for a student Mass and veneration. It was then transported to the Bluewater Rest Home where residents were also able to attend Mass and venerate the relic.



On Friday, October 20th students from St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School in Clinton participated in a school Mass and also had an opportunity to venerate the relic.

The photo carried as part of the procession, is a picture from the newspaper, of a painting of St. Brother André. Valerie Cantin, wife of Napoleon A. Cantin, had the picture framed and proudly hung it in her home where St. Brother André had stayed while in St. Joseph.





On Saturday and Sunday, the Major Reliquary of St. Brother André arrived in St. Peter's Parish.

To commemorate St. Brother André's return to the parish, both Masses at St. Peter's Parish were preceded by the recitation of the rosary in the St. Brother André Rosary Garden, in the presence of the Major Reliquary. The

Major Reliquary was processed to and from the church by a Knights of Columbus honour guard.



St. Brother André Healing Garden.



Parishioners prayed the rosary together, each standing on a cement "bead".

Saturday evening's Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Patrick Beneteau, Director of Vocations, from St. Peter's Seminary in London. Sunday's 11:00 a.m. Mass was celebrated by Bishop Joseph Dabrowski, CSMA, Auxiliary Bishop of London.



Rev. Fr. Matthew George, pastor, Bishop Joseph Dabrowski, CSMA, Auxiliary Bishop of London and Rev. Fr. Patrick Beneteau



The Major Reliquary of St. Brother André. Tablecloth designed and created by students from St. Boniface school in Zurich.

Two Cantin family heirlooms photographed on top of the reliquary. The larger rosary was made by hand by Jean-Paul Cantin, a grandson of Narcisse Cantin. The smaller rosary owned by St. Brother André was given to the Cantin family. It was passed down to André Cantin, a brother to Jean-Paul.



Opportunities for personal prayer and veneration were available throughout the weekend celebrations.



Attendees were served hamburgers and hot dogs following Mass on Saturday and Sunday.

November – Our ancestors - Our Heritage

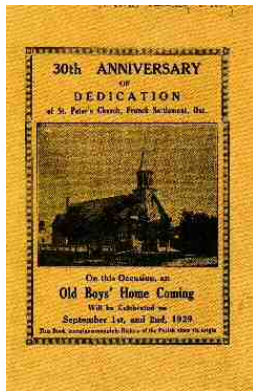
November gave parishioners an opportunity to remember their deceased family and friends. A handout was made available with tips for family historians wishing to find out more about their St. Peter's Parish ancestors.



Music teacher Christa Ducharme and several of her students entertained attendees with French Canadian folk songs.

December - Preserving Our Past - Parish & Community History

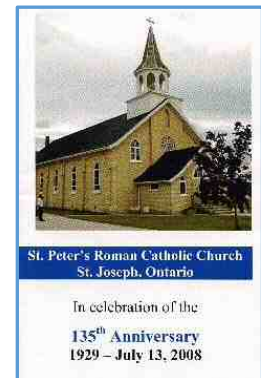
The final event was held in recognition of the history of this parish community and the people who contributed to preserving its past. The two earliest unpublished histories were handwritten in French. The first covered the period 1858 to 1861 and was prepared by Rev. Fr. Auguste Wassereau. The next was written by Rev. Fr. Joseph E. Courtois' in 1900 who was able to interview a few of the original settlers who had moved from Quebec.



In 1929, Rev. Fr. Leo Marchand prepared the 30th *Anniversary of Dedication of St. Peter's Church, French Settlement, Ont.* booklet. The next parish history update covered the period 1929 to 1979 and was completed by Rev. Fr. John J. Bensette in response to a request made by the Diocese. In 2008, *St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, St. Joseph, Ontario - In celebration of the 135th*

Anniversary, 1929 – July 13, 2008 was published by members of the 135th anniversary planning committee and was sold at the celebrations held that year. Three new booklets were completed as part of the 2017 St. Brother André 100 celebrations: *St. Peter's Parish History Update 2008-2017*,

2017 - A Year with St. Brother André, St. Peter's Parish, St. Joseph, and St. Brother André Among Us. These are available at <http://standre100.weebly.com>. For the final event of 2017, parishioners came together for a Christmas dinner and the lighting of the tree and nativity scene.

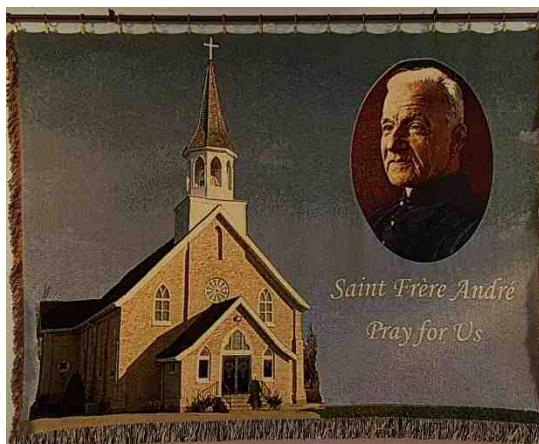


Rev. Fr. Matthew George, Peter and Evelyn Jeffrey, Loretta Ayotte

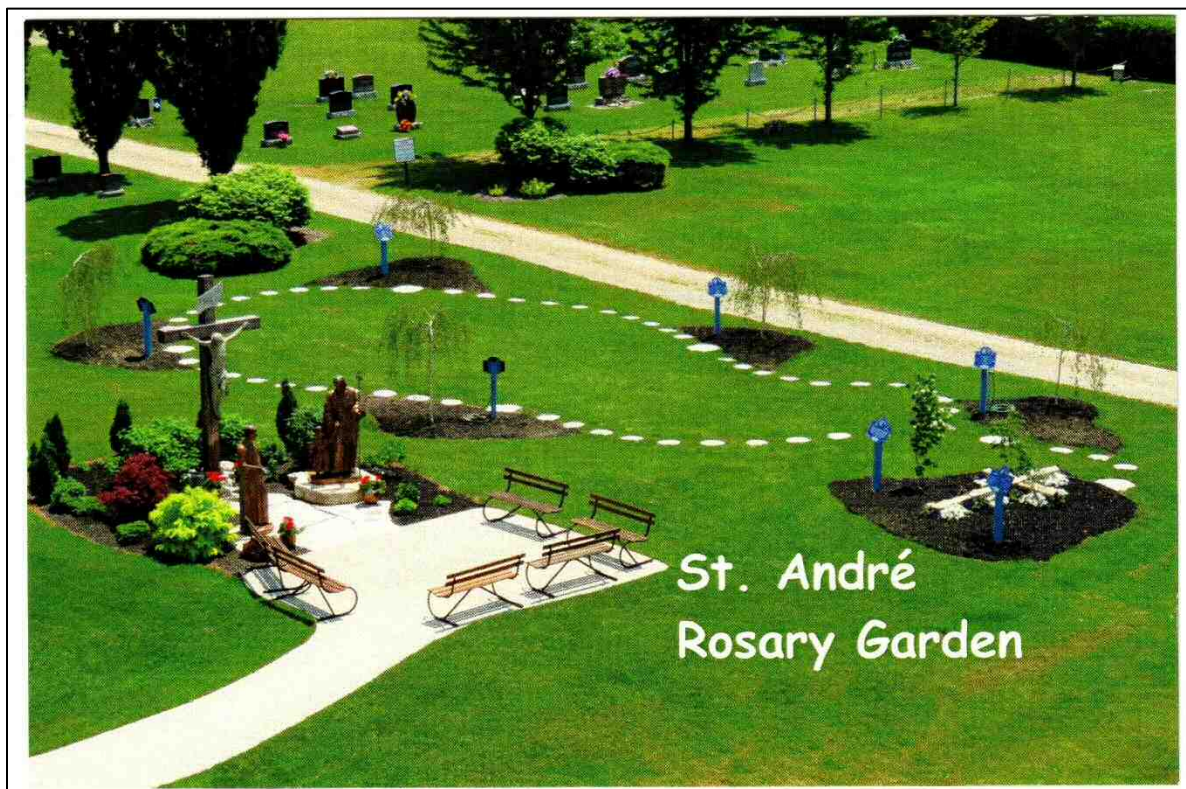




2017 also marked the 170th Anniversary of the arrival and settlement of this community by several French Canadian families in 1847. St. Peter's Parish's next historical milestone will be the 145th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the church on July 8, 2018.



This tapestry, donated by Phil and Patty LaPorte now hangs in St. Peter's parish hall, as a reminder to all, that St. Brother André Bessette of Montreal walked among us!



"The Rosary is a long chain that links heaven and earth. One end of it is in our hands and the other end is in the hands of the holy Virgin...the rosary prayer rises like incense to the feet of the Almighty."

St. Thérèse Lisieux

Photo and design by Loretta Ayotte and Phil LaPorte

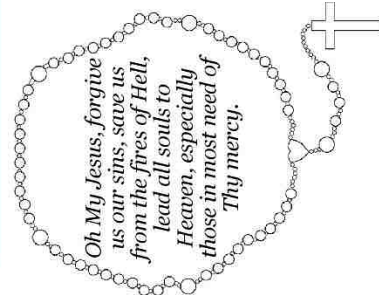
THE ROSARY GARDEN



The Rosary Garden was created and blessed in 2017 as part of the centenary celebrations of Brother André's first visit to this area.

Brother André learned to pray the rosary kneeling at his mother's feet, his tiny hands following the beads which his mother held. Later in life, it was a common sight to see Brother André, beads in hand, reciting the rosary.

"If you consider all the saints, you will see that all of them had a devotion to the Blessed Virgin; Her intercession is most powerful, she is the Mother of God and the Mother of men."



Now as you continue your walk enter the cemetery.

THE CEMETERY



"When I die, I will go to heaven, I will be much closer to God than I am now; I will have more power to help you."

Our earliest settlers are buried behind the church hall. Many of the wrought iron crosses made by Joseph Ducharme, the local blacksmith and the older white tombstones have since deteriorated. Around 1990, through the generosity of our parishioners, a cairn was formed out of the salvaged tombstones, and a cross and corpus, shipped from Italy was erected. A stone grotto, built by Tony Laporte and statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary can be found on the south side of the cemetery, in the Mary Garden. The area is surrounded by trees and shrubs and provides a quiet place for prayer.

Almighty Father, source of forgiveness and salvation, grant that our relatives and friends who have passed from this life may, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, come to share your Eternal happiness through Christ our Lord. Amen

Before you exit the cemetery spend a moment in prayer at the monument for aborted and miscarried children.

Thank you for following
"St. André's Path of Prayer" today!
St. André, priez pour nous!

ST. ANDRÉ'S PATH OF PRAYER St. Peter's Church, St. Joseph, Ontario



Walk the path and stop for a quiet moment of prayer at these places around St. Peter's Church, St. Joseph with Saint André at your side.

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



Begin your journey at the front of the church before the Blessed Sacrament, near the statue of St. Joseph and the reliquary of St. Brother André. St. Brother André spent much time in personal prayer before the Holy Eucharist. This was one of the special places that he loved to pray. With him at your side, acknowledge God here present and pray...

My Lord Jesus Christ, for the love which You bear to all, You remain night and day in this Sacrament full of compassion and of love, awaiting, calling, and welcoming all who come to visit You. I believe that You are present in the Sacrament of the Altar: I adore You from the bottom of my heart, and I thank You for all the graces which You have bestowed upon me and in particular for having given me Yourself in this Sacrament, and for having called me to visit You in this church. Amen.

It is known that Brother André Bessette C.S.C. visited this area twice, once in 1917 and again in 1922, through the invitation of a local family. The basis of the invitation was for him to come for a "rest" from his rigorous and demanding life in Montreal. St. André attended mass at this church as part of his daily routine. Leave the church exiting by the front doors. Look to your left. You will see a statue of the Sacred Heart and beyond it you will see your next stop...

ST. JOSEPH & ST. ANDRÉ



In 1955, this statue of Brother André, St. Joseph and the child Jesus, commemorating Brother André's 1917 and 1922 visits was unveiled. Joseph Cantin organized the campaign to raise funds for the statue which was made in Montreal.

"I am nothing. Only a tool in the hands of providence; a lowly instrument at the service of St. Joseph."

Lord our God, friend of the lowly, you gave your servant, St. André Bessette, a great devotion to St. Joseph and a special commitment to the poor and afflicted. Through his intercession help us to follow his example of prayer and love and so come to share with him in your glory. (mention your intention) We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

"Pray to St. Joseph and he will always be your father and guide."

Directly behind this statue is your next stop, the Healing Garden.

THE HEALING GARDEN



The Healing Garden was dedicated in 2014. A committee of interested parishioners undertook the task of creating an area for quiet contemplation and prayer. Birch trees were later planted as a reminder of the first French settlers who named their parish St. Pierre aux Bouleaux - St. Peter's of the Birch Trees. Although Brother André came here to rest, he brought his deep devotion to St. Joseph and the Holy Spirit's charism of healing to all! St. André healed many people in this community through the intercession of St. Joseph. There were healings of a physical and spiritual nature. St. André inspired a deep and lasting love of Jesus Christ through the intercession of St. Joseph which has been passed down from generation to generation.

Bro. André, I come to you in prayer for healing, (state your need) You were no stranger to illness. Plagued by stomach problems, you knew suffering on a daily basis, but you never lost faith in God. Thousands of people have sought your healing touch as I do today. Pray that I might be restored to health in body, soul, and mind. With St. Joseph as my loving Protector, strengthen my faith and give me peace that I might accept God's will for me no matter the outcome. Amen.

Now move to the Rosary Garden.



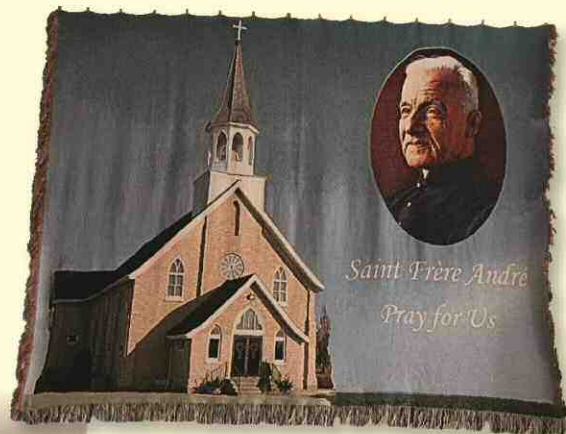
Throughout the Wide World

by Nathalie DUMAS

On every continent, institutions and ministries bear the name of Saint André Bessette. Since his canonization in 2010, a number of parish communities have chosen him as their patron saint. He has become a spiritual guide for many parishes around the world! Although Brother André had very little education, now there are elementary and secondary schools which proudly bear his name. His way of life teaches perseverance, openness, love of neighbor and love of God. *The Oratory Magazine presents some places Saint Brother André calls home!*

ST. JOSEPH, ONTARIO

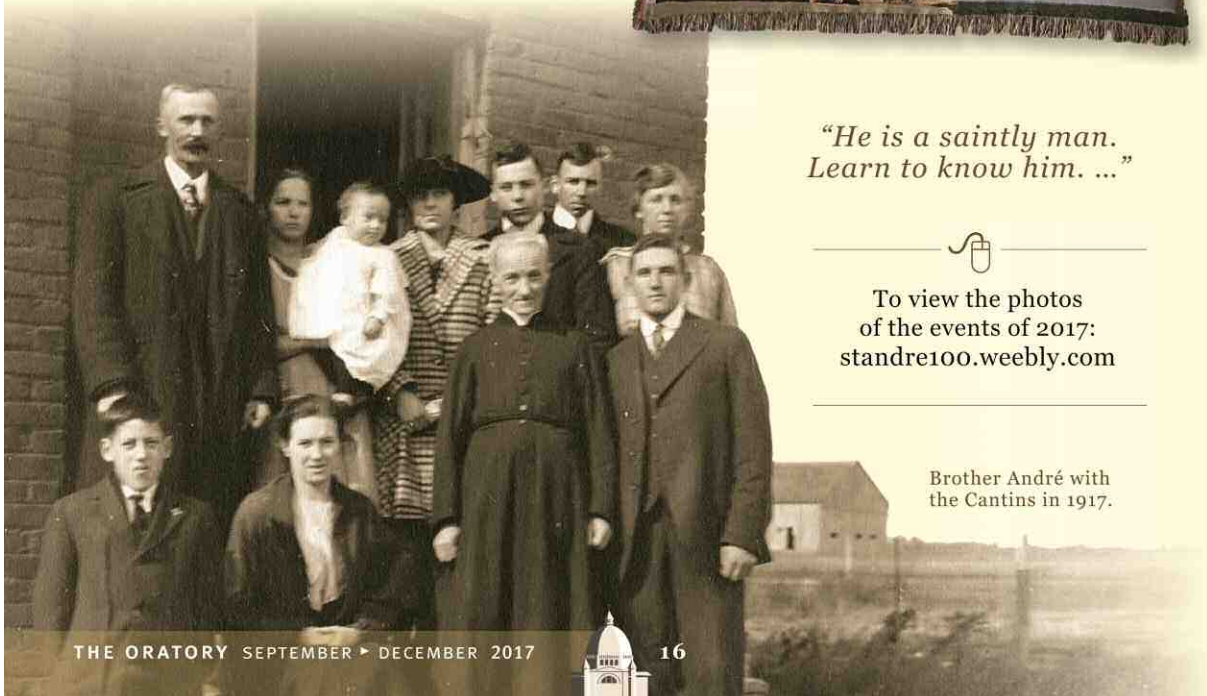
"In this part of the country, as nowhere else, people remember Brother André from generation to generation", read a report that appeared in the *The Oratory* magazine in 2009. This affirmation is more relevant than ever before. The parish community of St. Peter, formerly known as Saint-Pierre-aux-Bouleaux, has been active throughout 2017 to highlight the figure of the religious saint to commemorate his first visit to St. Joseph, Ontario, a hundred years ago, in October 1917.



*"He is a saintly man.
Learn to know him. ..."*



To view the photos
of the events of 2017:
standre100.weebly.com



Brother André with
the Cantins in 1917.

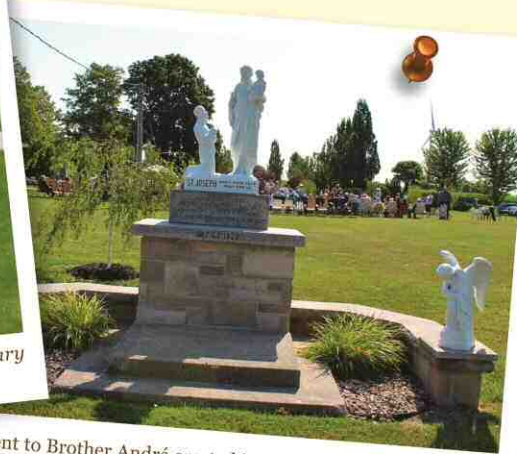
THE ORATORY SEPTEMBER ► DECEMBER 2017

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THE ORATORY SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER, 2017



View on St. André Healing Garden and the new St. André Rosary Garden inaugurated in July. Photo: Loretta Ayotte



The monument to Brother André erected in 1955 was recently restored. It says in French, "En souvenir du révérend frère André qui a demeuré quelques temps parmi nous. 1917 et 1922" (In memory of the Reverend Brother André who lived awhile among us. 1917 and 1922.)

A Great Program of Festivities!

The parishioners created opportunities to meet every month of the year, highlighting the death of Brother André in January and his vocation as a religious in February with the World Day for Consecrated Life. Celebrations honoured carpenters in March, first responders and medical field workers in May, then farmers in June. A tapestry illustrating the church and Brother André inset was unveiled in June. The blessing of *St. André Rosary Garden* was on July 2. This original landscaping adds to the place of prayer named *St. André Healing Garden* where we find a statue of the religious and another of Saint Joseph surrounding Jesus on the cross. The families of St. Joseph met on August 6 to highlight the birthday of Alfred Bessette (born August 9, 1845). A cake had even been prepared for the occasion!

From One Trip to Another

One hundred years after Brother André's visit to this city on the shores of Lake Huron, the Major Reliquary of the saint is greeted from October 20 to 26 in various schools and parishes of the Diocese of London in Clinton, St. Joseph, Stratford, London, Pain Court, Windsor, Sarnia and Woodstock.

In October 1917, Narcisse Cantin had entrusted the hospitality of the religious to his son Napoleon by sending him these words in a letter: "He is a saintly man. Learn to know him. He will delight you with wisdom." Today, echoing these words, residents of St. Joseph and this region in Ontario are delighted and inspired by Saint Brother André, their friend and kind host.





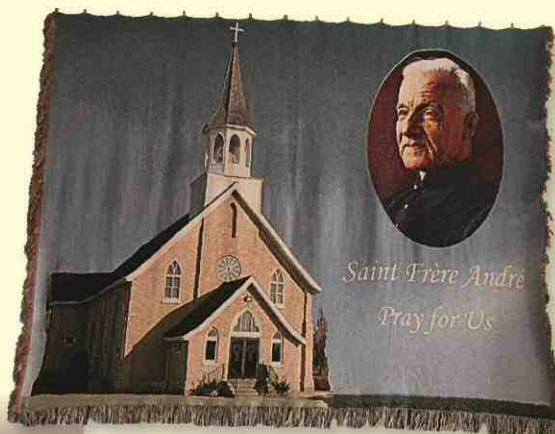
De par le vaste monde

par Nathalie DUMAS

Sur tous les continents, des institutions et des œuvres s'inspirent de saint frère André et le prennent comme modèle. Depuis sa canonisation, en 2010, il est devenu le guide spirituel de plusieurs communautés paroissiales qui l'ont choisi comme saint patron. Alfred Bessette n'avait reçu que peu d'instruction; aujourd'hui, des écoles portent fièrement son nom. Son exemple de vie enseigne la persévérance, l'accueil, l'amour du prochain et l'amour de Dieu. *La revue L'Oratoire vous présente des endroits où saint frère André est invoqué!*

ST. JOSEPH, ONTARIO

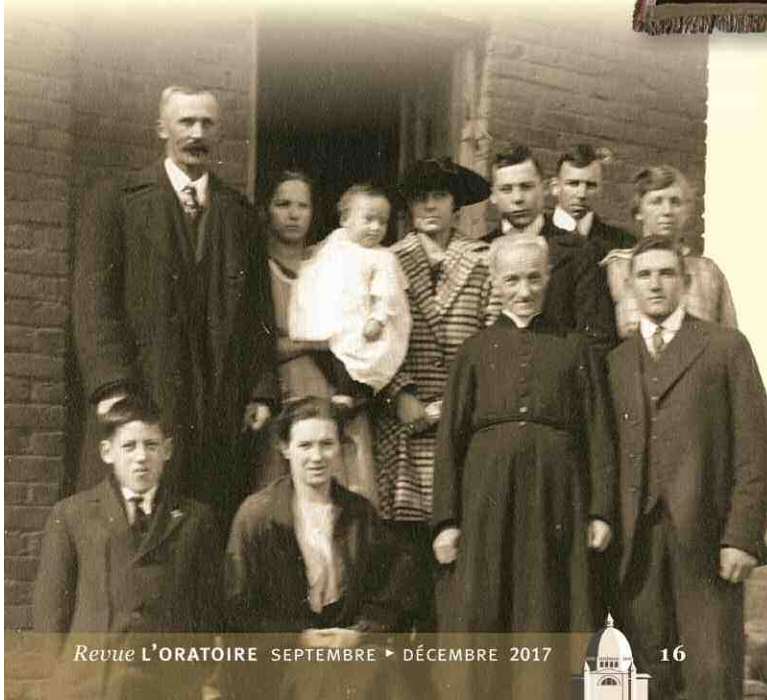
« En ce coin de pays comme nulle part ailleurs, d'une génération à l'autre, on se souvient du frère André », écrivions-nous dans un reportage de la revue, en 2009. Cette affirmation s'avère encore plus que jamais! La communauté paroissiale de St. Peter, autrefois nommée Saint-Pierre-aux-Bouleaux, s'est activée tout au long de 2017 à mettre en valeur la figure du saint religieux afin de commémorer sa toute première visite à St. Joseph, Ontario, il y a cent ans, en octobre 1917.



« Il est un saint homme.
Apprends à le connaître... »



Pour regarder
les photos des événements
de l'année 2017 :
standre100.weebly.com



Le frère André accueilli
par la famille Cantin en 1917.

Revue L'ORATOIRE SEPTEMBRE ► DÉCEMBRE 2017

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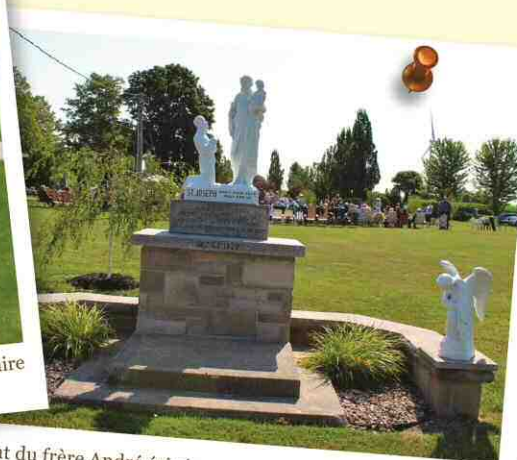
REVUE L'ORATOIRE SEPTEMBRE-DÉCEMBRE 2017



Rayonnement de SAINT FRÈRE ANDRÉ



Vue sur le « St. André Healing Garden » et le nouveau jardin du rosaire aménagé cette année. Photo : Loretta Ayotte



Le monument du frère André érigé en 1955 a récemment été restauré. On peut y lire : « En souvenir du révérend frère André qui a demeuré quelques temps parmi nous. 1917 et 1922 ».

Tout un programme de festivités!

Les paroissiens ont créé des occasions de rencontre à chacun des mois de l'année soulignant d'abord le décès du frère André en janvier puis sa vocation de religieux en février avec la Journée de la vie consacrée. Des célébrations ont honoré les menuisiers en mars, les intervenants en soins d'urgence et du milieu de la santé en mai puis les agriculteurs en juin. Une tapisserie illustrant l'église et le frère André en médaillon a été dévoilée en juin (illustrée à la page 16). Inauguré le 2 juillet, un jardin invite les fidèles à réciter le rosaire en compagnie du frère André. Cet aménagement original s'ajoute au lieu de prière nommé « St. André Healing Garden » où l'on retrouve une statue du religieux et une autre de saint Joseph entourant Jésus en croix. Une réunion des familles de St. Joseph s'est tenue le 6 août soulignant du coup l'anniversaire de naissance d'Alfred Bessette (né le 9 août 1845). Un gâteau de circonstance lui avait même été préparé!

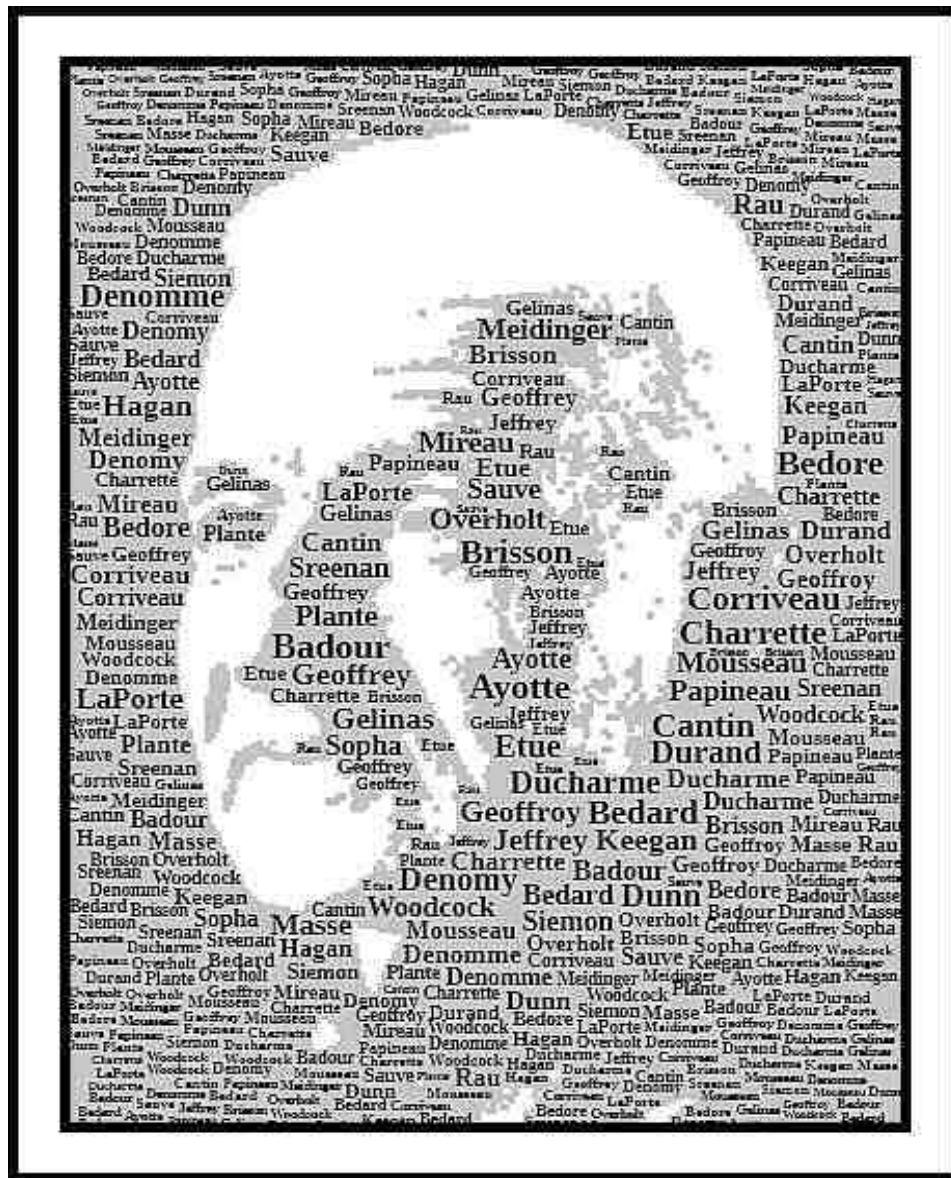
D'un voyage à l'autre

Cent ans après la visite du frère André dans cette ville située sur les rives du lac Huron, c'est le reliquaire du saint qui est accueilli du 20 au 26 octobre dans diverses écoles et paroisses du diocèse de London, soit à Clinton, St. Joseph, Stratford, London, Paincourt, Windsor, Sarnia et Woodstock.

En octobre 1917, Narcisse Cantin avait confié l'hospitalité du religieux à son fils Napoléon en lui adressant ces mots dans une lettre : « Il est un saint homme. Apprends à le connaître; il va te ravir par sa sagesse » (notre traduction). Aujourd'hui encore, en écho à ces paroles, les résidents de St. Joseph et de cette région de l'Ontario se laissent ravir et inspirer par saint frère André, leur ami et leur hôte bienveillant.



St. Brother André Among Us



(<http://www.tagxedo.com>)

**Photos, stories of miraculous healings and
parishioners' memories from the time
St. Brother André was among us**

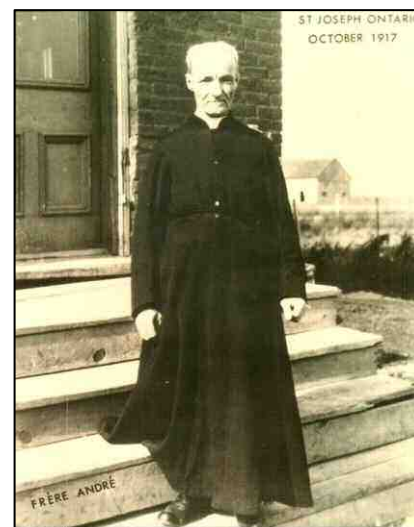
The Saint André 100 Committee, 2017

Compiled by Elaine (Jeffrey) Coxon



St. Brother André with children from the St. Joseph area

[L to R] Nelson Cantin in front of Stella Jeffrey, Gabrielle Cantin, Blanche Jeffrey, Irene Jeffrey holding Eva Cantin, St. Brother André, Louise (Jeffrey) Cantin, and Dominic Jeffrey



St. Brother André on back porch of Narcisse Cantin's home.

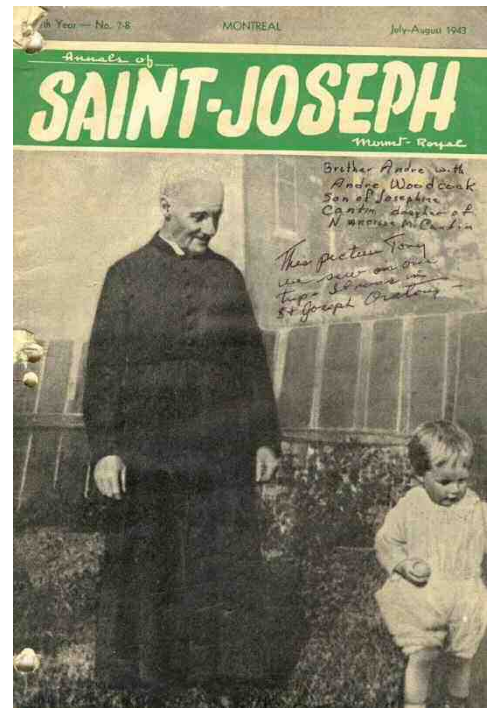


St. Joseph, 1917 – St. Brother André with Denomme Family

BR: L to R Louis Denomme, Anne Cantin holding Gabrielle Cantin, Eugenie, Maxime & Solomon Denomme, Josephine Cantin

FR: L to R Louis Gonzague Cantin, Valerie (Laporte) Cantin, St. Brother André, Joseph Cantin

Nelson, Eva and Joe Cantin with St. Brother André



On cover "Brother André with André Woodcock, son of Josephine Cantin, daughter of Narcisse M. Cantin."



The Cantin Family

Madeleine Cantin, Valerie (Laporte) Cantin, Josephine (Denomme) Cantin with Gabrielle Cantin in front of Josephine, Marie Cantin holding godchild Napoleon Cantin Jr., Antoinette and Anne Cantin, Pierre Denomme, Napoleon A. Cantin, St. Brother André, Arthur Sreenan, Gonzague (Louis) Cantin

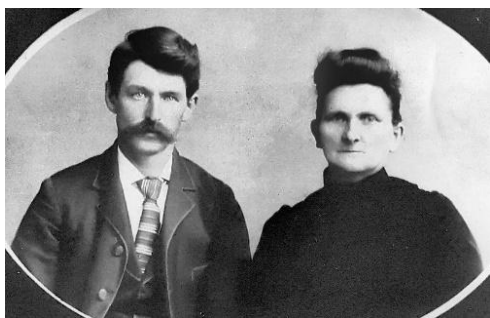
Miraculous Healings

While visiting St. Joseph, Brother André met with many of St. Peter's parishioners, several of whom were healed of various ailments through his intercession.



Anna Etue, wife of Edward Etue, had a goiter medical problem for many years. In 1922, she was also suffering from internal bleeding and was not receiving any relief by medical attention. During Brother André's 1922 visit to St. Joseph, Edward Etue arranged for Brother André to visit Anna in the family home, where she was bedridden. During the visit, she asked Brother André to pray over her for relief from the goiter as well as the internal bleeding. Brother André responded that his prayers wouldn't be effective for the complex goiter problem, but he would pray for relief of the internal bleeding. Shortly thereafter, the bleeding stopped and didn't reoccur during the rest of

Anna's life. (This story was told to Margaret Mary (Masse) Brisson by her mother Genevieve Etue, daughter of Edward & Anna Etue, who was present during Brother André's visit to the family home. Prepared by: Paul Edward De La Franier, April 2017)



Edward & Edwidge (Gravelle) Denomme

Mrs. Edward Denomme was suffering from a "running sore" in her mouth caused by a bad tooth. This sore had been present for six or seven years. Edward Corriveau and his mother, Mathilda (Gravelle) Corriveau, took Mrs. Denomme to see Brother André. After her visit, she was completely cured and the sore never returned. (As told by Edward Corriveau.)

As a child, **Maxime Jeffrey** suffered from adenoids and had to breathe through his mouth and sleep sitting up. Brother André placed his fingers on the bridge of Maxime's nose and he placed his other hand on Maxime's head. He was able to breathe freely and his adenoid problem never returned. (As told by Maxime Jeffrey.)



Peter Denomme was dying from fluid on the lungs. Dr. O'Dwyer felt that Mr. Denomme would not last the day. Brother André came to his bedside and prayed with him. Mr. Denomme immediately got out of bed. Prior to Brother André's visit, Mr. Denomme had been unable to swallow water without choking on it. By noontime, he was eating a large meal. (As told by Edward Corriveau, who was present.)





Zoé Tousignant was unable to walk without a cane. Brother André told her to throw the cane away. Much to her surprise, once she did, she was able to walk. (As told by Edward Corriveau.)

Jessiah Bedard walked with crutches. He went to visit Brother André, who told him that he no longer needed his crutches. After having a chat with Brother André, when Josiah was about to leave, he leaned over to get his crutches and Brother André again told him he didn't need them. Jessiah was able to walk without crutches, but did so in a slightly bent-over position. Jessiah Bedard worked in the Drysdale store. (As told by Sarah (Masse) Jeffrey & Gerard Geoffroi.)



Edward Denomme had asthma, which made it difficult for him to work his farm and support his family of 11. His daughter Priscille remembers her father as "a good and hard worker." His condition was treated by inhaling an asthma powder from a tin dish that looked like a lamp shade. Her father would often say, "If I only had my breathing..." Priscille's uncle from Michigan drove Edward to the Oratory in Montreal where they met with Brother André in the "little caboose." While placing one hand on

Edward's head and one on his chest, Brother André explained that while Edward would not be completely cured, he would be able to sleep at night, work his farm, and support his family. From that day forward, Edward no longer needed to use the asthma powder to breathe. (As told by Priscille (Denomme) Brandt.)

Emeline Jeffrey walked over to see Brother André about a painful tooth. When she arrived, he asked her why she had come. She explained that she was in pain because of her tooth. He replied, "But you lost it along the way." Emeline put her hand to where her sore tooth had been and was surprised that the pain was gone and the area felt fine. Brother André knew, before Emeline arrived, what her ailment was and that she had been healed. (As told by Gerard Geoffroi, her nephew.)



Séraphine (Masse) Bédard

While dining with Brother André in her home, Séraphine (Masse) Bédard was cured of an infectious tooth. Her daughter Beatrice was present. (A family story as remembered by Terry Davies, a great-granddaughter to Seraphine.)

"Mrs. Oscar Ducharme Jr. — a Picture of Brother André. She claims Brother André cured one of her sons in home here in St. Joseph from "taking fits." Urban Ducharme, now completely well, never took a fit afterwards." (As recorded by Napoleon Cantin in a notebook dated May 1st 1937)

May 1st 1937
Mrs. Oscar Ducharme Jr. - a picture of
Bro André. She claims Bro André -
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S. Priscille Therese Ducharme

"April 3rd 1937 To Fred Ducharme family, 1 picture of dear Bro André. Brother André cured one of his daughters (Priscille) now a nun - Sister Priscille Therese of asthma - 1917 -" (As recorded by Napoleon Cantin in a notebook dated May 1st 1937)

April 3rd 1937
To Fred Ducharme family -
1 picture of dear Bro André
Bro André cured one of his
daughters (Priscille) now a
nun Sister - Priscille Therese -
of Asthma in 1917 -

In 1922, Brother André cured **Charlie Rau**, then a young boy, of stuttering. His mother took him to see Brother André who was visiting at Joseph & Seraphine (Masse) Bedard's home at the time. (As remembered by John-Paul Rau in 2017, Charles's son.)



Dennis Charrette was born with a hernia and was required to walk with a brace. His mother took him to see Brother André at Seraphine (Masse) Bedard's home. Brother André told Dennis that he didn't need the brace anymore and Dennis was able to get around without it after that. (As told by Rev. Fr. Richard Charrette, his son.)

Napoleon Louis Denomme, born August 7, 1902, at St. Joseph, Ontario, was the third of twelve children of Philip Denomme and Anne Durand. When Napoleon L. Denomme ... was young, he had an accident and got blood poisoning. It was believed that he would lose his leg. Brother André, who was visiting St. Joseph, was asked to pray for him. After he prayed, Brother André told them that he would not lose the leg. When he died in 1975, he still limped, but he never lost his leg. (As recorded by Philippe L. Denomme.)



Napoleon seated on his father's lap

Malvina Courville (Mother of Aldea Larouche Denomme) was having a gallbladder attack. She dictated a letter to Brother André telling him how she felt and explaining that she had a large family to raise. She asked if he would pray for her. She was sick for 16 days and couldn't eat. When Brother André's reply came, the letter had prayers in it. Everybody knelt down and said the prayers. When they were finished, she started feeling better, sat up, and ate her first meal in days. She died some years later of an unrelated cause. (As written by Philippe L. Denomme.)

Celima (Ducharme) Bédard



During Brother André's visit, Celima (Ducharme) Bédard was cured of lockjaw. A family story was told that Nelson, Celima's son, called to his mother over one day to come look at the steam coming out of the kettle where they could see the image of St. Brother André's. (As told to Mary Anne (Bédard) Masse, Celima's daughter.)

Thelma (Dolly) Jeffrey went to visit her dear friend, Valerie Cantin and asked to borrow the wool grey blanket Brother André had used on his bed, so that she could wrap her sick baby in it. The fever left instantly and the child got up, ran and played.



Adelard "Delore" Ducharme was unable to walk because his legs were frail. Brother André rubbed his legs with St. Joseph oil and Mr. Ducharme was able to walk. (as told by Edward Corriveau)

Brother André Remembered

A few memories of Saint Brother André's visits to St. Peter's Parish in St. Joseph have been recorded:

Catherine (Jeffrey) Gregus.



This scapular and bottle of holy oil were blessed by St. Brother André and given to Catherine (Jeffrey) Gregus.

As a child, Catherine remembers visiting Valerie Cantin, playing upstairs and walking around in a pair shoes that St. Brother André had left behind.



Louise Etue

"My mother, Louise Etue, was 11 years old when Brother André first visited St. Joseph in 1917. She spoke often and reverently about her memories of this visit as well as subsequent visits by Brother André. She would relate her impressions of what he said, his method of speech, mannerisms, physical size, etc. as well as how 'holy' he seemed to be. He had a very large, long-lasting impact on her religious beliefs.

Throughout her lifetime she subscribed to the St. Joseph Oratory Annuals. They were always present on her night table. At age 71, her one and only visit to St. Joseph Oratory in Montreal occurred when I was able to take her there in 1977. She was enthralled by the whole experience and considered it a highlight of her lifetime." (Respectfully submitted by her eldest son, Paul Edward De La Franier)

Edward N. Corriveau, 1917



Edward N. Corriveau (1896-1984), son of Joseph Corriveau and Mathilda Gravelle, had an opportunity to meet with Saint André in 1917. St. André told Edward that he needn't be concerned about going to war because he would return home unharmed. He also reassured Edward that he wouldn't have to kill anyone while overseas. As it turns out, St. André was correct. Edward didn't fire at another person while overseas. The only thing he shot was a pigeon, which he gave to the family he was stationed with in Belgium for their next meal. This gesture wasn't received as hoped, since he'd unknowingly shot their daughter's pet pigeon. On the morning of Nov. 11, 1918, Edward and his battalion were packed and ready to move to the front lines. The message board in the camp stated that they were to wait as the peace talks were drawing to a close. By 11 o'clock that morning, armistice was

signed and the war had ended. For the remainder of 1918, and part of 1919, Edward and his battalion escorted the German soldiers out of France, through Belgium and into Germany. Since he could speak French, Edward went ahead with a billeting team and acted as an interpreter, arranging for places for the troops to stay at night. (as told to his grand-daughter, Elaine (Jeffrey) Coxon)



St. Brother André stayed with the family of Napoleon A. and Valerie Cantin while visiting St. Joseph. The white arrow indicates the room where St. Brother André slept.

Brother Andre still thrills him

By BRUCE LEVY

Sixty years ago, when Theodore LaPorte was in his teens, he spent a couple of weeks acting as a volunteer chauffeur. Now, at the age of 77, the retired Windsor resident says he is "intriguedly thrilled" to find out that the man he drove around the parish of St. Joseph, near Grand Bend, stands a good chance of being declared a saint by the Roman Catholic church.

LaPorte was in hospital for a checkup when he saw an article in The Windsor Star earlier this month about Brother Andre, a Canadian, who died in 1937. The article stated that the Pope had declared Brother Andre venerable, which is one of the first steps towards sainthood.

LaPorte was born in St. Joseph and lived there until the Second World War. During his childhood it was a small, predominantly French-Canadian community consisting of only 100 families.

At some point during the First World War, LaPorte can't remember exactly when, Brother Andre visited St. Joseph from Montreal.

Brother Andre was already an elderly man, LaPorte remembers, with many wrinkles, of slight stature and stooped posture.

LaPorte was an altar boy in St. Peter's Church and since his father had a car, the young LaPorte was enlisted to drive Brother Andre the one and a quarter miles to mass and back every day.

LaPorte says that even then Brother Andre had a reputation for being able to cure, and many sick and crippled people went to see him in the St. Peter's sacristy.

LaPorte says he can remember at least one man who claimed to have had a bad leg cured by Brother Andre.

One day, says LaPorte, Brother Andre suddenly said "I've never driven a car." The young LaPorte offered to let him try and that was all the invitation he needed.

He drove all the way home, LaPorte chuckles, "and got quite a kick out of it."

After reading last week's article, LaPorte says, "I have quite a thrill just to know I shook hands with him."

A black and white portrait of Theodore LaPorte, an elderly man with glasses, looking thoughtfully to the side.

Photo by STARSTAFF
Theodore LaPorte recalls Brother Andre

Contact saintandre100@gmail.com if you have a story to share.