
GOODBYE TO FATHER JOSEPH MOISAN



On June 21 parishioners paid tribute to Father Joseph Moisan, O.F.M., in gratitude to him; I too want to add my voice to theirs. The departure of this last of the Franciscans closes a very beautiful chapter of our history. The diocese profited from the presence of the Franciscan Brothers and Fathers for over three quarters of a century. I join you in expressing our deepest thanks.

WORDS FAIL ME

On behalf of the Edmundston Diocese Church and in my own name I want to express my deep gratitude to Father Joseph Moisan for all he has been within our Church, and more especially at Saint-Coeur-de-Marie Parish of Baker Brook where he has served for thirty-two years. Words fail me to express the gratitude we owe him. And so, I want to make mine the words of a prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi, a beautiful prayer of gratitude.

UNIVERSAL PRAISE

« Most high, almighty and good Lord, to You be praise, glory, honour, and all blessing; they befit You, O Most High, and no person is worthy to name You. Blessed are You, my Lord, in all your creatures, especially for Brother Sun through whom You give the light of day; he is beautiful, shining in great splendour, and he is to us the symbol of You, the Most High. Blessed are You, my Lord, for Sister Moon and the Stars, You formed them in the heavens, bright, precious, and beautiful. Blessed are You, my Lord, for Brother Wind, for the air and the clouds and the blue sky, and for all the time that You give to maintain all creation. Blessed are You, my Lord, for Sister Water who is very useful and humble, precious and pure Blessed are you, my Lord, for Brother Fire by whom you enlighten the night: he is beautiful and joyful, unconquerable and strong. Blessed are You, my Lord, for our Mother Earth who bears us and feeds us, and who produces a diversity of fruits, multicolored flowers and grasses. Blessed are You, my Lord, for those who forgive for love of You, and who endure trials and illness; happy are they to be peacemakers because they shall be crowned by You. »

A FEW ADDITIONS

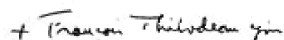
And I am sure that today St. Francis of Assisi would add a few extra verses today in honour of the wonderful ministry that was carried out by Father Joseph and his confreres in the Church of Edmundston. "Blessed are You, my Lord, for all those brothers and fathers who have toiled and laboured over seventy-five years in the Southern Victoria, Edmundston, and Upper Madawaska deaneries. Blessed are You, my Lord, for their having contributed in the building up of the Maliseet, Aroostook, Perth-Andover, Saint Patrick, Tilley, Plaster Rock, Blue Bell, Anderson Road, Red Rapids, [Bairdsville], and Baker Brook Christian communities. Blessed are You, my Lord, for having given as first bishop to your Church at Edmundston Bishop Marie-Antoine Roy. Through him, a new Church was founded; through him, his wisdom, his prayer and his word, a vibrant and promising Church was established. Blessed are You, my Lord, for the wonderful work of my brother Joseph at Baker Brook. Through the witness of his life and his constant devotedness, his regard for everyone, his prayer, his patience and goodness, through his joy and good humour, his songs and music, his celebrations and preaching, You built up the Christian community of Baker Brook.

Blessed are You, my Lord, for my brother Joseph's tireless ministry to the youth, the workers, the elderly, the sick, persons and families in times of crisis, illness, and mourning. Blessed are You, my Lord, for the wisdom of my brother Joseph, for his faith, hope, and charity, for his profession of faith, these last thirty-two years, these last 11,700 days he lived at Baker Brook despite all kinds of difficulties that were the lot of accumulated years. Blessed are You, my Lord, for our brother Joseph's faithfulness, for being faithful to his vocation, to his religious order, to his Church, his bishop and brother-priests, for his faithfulness to the people over which he was the shepherd, and for being true to his given word."

WISHES

We could continue indefinitely with this thanksgiving, but Jesus himself will be our thanksgiving to the Father. It is truly good and just to always give thanks for all His marvellous works. May this Eucharist be, therefore, our thanksgiving especially for the wonderful work accomplished in our midst by Father Joseph. I pray the Lord to bless one hundredfold everything that was sowed among us by Father Joseph. In the depth of my heart I ask the lord to raise other Father Josephs among us; our Church has great need of them. I also ask the Lord to bless Father Joseph's retirement, that it be filled with happiness and health. An finally, I hope that we shall see him often come back to the Madawaska region.

Have a good week!



+ François Thibodeau
Bishop of Edmundston

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