



Winter, 2018-2019

The Gospel according to Luke

The Birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.



Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to

them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

The Visit of the Shepherds

When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.

-- *Luke 2:1-20*

St. Jean de Brébeuf, S.J.

(1593-1649)

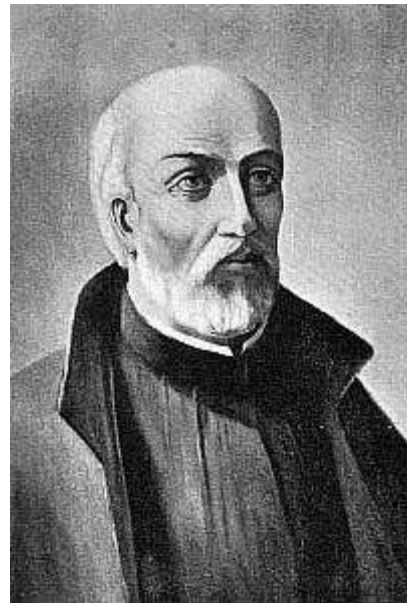
A group of Jesuit missionaries from Europe worked to convert the Huron and other Native Americans in what is now southern Ontario and upstate New York during the 17th century, establishing a mission at Sainte Marie in the midst of the Hurons in 1611. It was dangerous for them to undertake this work in a foreign, sometimes hostile land far from their homeland, but if anything, they were persistent. Their intent was to spread the Gospel and convert the native people.

Jean de Brébeuf was born at Condé-sur-Vire in Normandy, France, on March 25, 1593. He entered into the Society of Jesus as a scholastic in 1617. Brébeuf possessed unusual physical strength, however, he began to experience health problems (tuberculosis) in his late 20's which interfered with his studies and as a result, he never a great deal of theological knowledge to any extent. He was assigned to a missionary position in New France (Canada), arriving in Quebec in 1625. To the colonists living there, he was a foreigner and as others had experienced before him, they had a

A wish for peace and happiness at Christmas and throughout the New Year

distrust of the Jesuits. He spent five months that winter living in a wigwam on the St. Charles and learning the language and customs of the Huron and overcoming their fear of what

he represented to them. In the spring he set out in a canoe with Fr. de Noüe and a group of Huron Indians, destined for Lake Huron. Brébeuf came to realize that he was surrounded by danger. They established a mission at Ihonatiria, near Georgian Bay, but met with little success and in short order Brébeuf was called back to Quebec, in 1628. The following year, following Champlain's surrender to the English, the missionaries returned to France.



St. Jean de Brébeuf, S.J.

In France, Fr. Brébeuf continued with his spiritual studies and proclaimed his vows as spiritual coadjutor. After four years the colony had been restored to France and he returned to Canada and attempted to resume his work at Lake Huron. It was not an easy task, as the Indians would not accept him. Eventually, although in constant danger of losing his life, he was able to return and resume his work. Brébeuf would spend the remainder of his life in New France.

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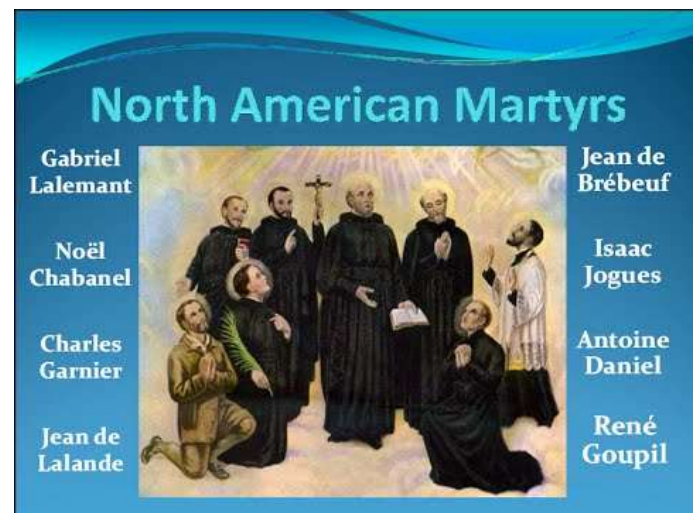
St. Jean de Brébeuf, S.J.

(continued from page 2)

1640 found Brébeuf and Father Chaumonot heading to an area north of Lake Erie in an unsuccessful attempt to evangelize the Neutres Indians, despite putting themselves in some very dangerous situations. He was assigned to Quebec where his job was to care for the Indians at the Reservation at Sillery. A war was raging between the Hurons and the Iroquois, and during this time Jesuits Frs. Isaac Jogues and Indian missionary Francesco Bressani had been captured while trying to reach St. Mary's on the Wye in the Huron country. The Jesuits assigned Fr. Brébeuf and Jesuit Frs. Noël Chabanel and Léonard Garreau the same mission. It was to be the third attempt, and this time Brébeuf and company made it work. The Iroquois continued to make war with the Hurons as more atrocities continued to take place; as the "Black Robes" (as the Jesuits were known in the area) tried to restore order they were killed, and their fortifications were burned. When the refuge at St. Louis was attacked, Frs. Brébeuf and Lalemant rejected an offer by which they could have escaped and instead chose to stay with those in their charge; both were captured and dragged to St. Ignace, near Georgian Bay, another site that had been conquered by the Iroquois.

The fate that awaited them there on March 16, 1649 was horrendous. They were stoned and beaten severely with clubs, then tied to posts for the purpose of burning them to death. Their bodies were slashed with knives as fires were ignited beneath them. To mock the sacrament

of Baptism, scalding water was poured over Fr. Brébeuf's head, and tomahawk heads that had been heated to red-hot were formed into a collar and placed around his neck. A red-hot iron was jammed down his throat and after his death, his heart was cut out and removed. One of his torturers, "Poudre chaude," later became an exemplary Christian. Brébeuf never once uttered a groan throughout his ordeal.



The memory of Jean de Brébeuf, S.J. is cherished in Canada more than that of any of the early missionaries in that region. Frs. Brébeuf, Isaac Jogues, Gabriel Lalemant, Noël Chabanel and four others all lost their lives to martyrdom in the decade of the 1640's. They had been put to death as a result of a hatred of Christianity. All were canonized by Pope Pius XI on June 29, 1930. Collectively, they are known as the North American Martyrs.

Jean de Brébeuf: Saint among the Hurons, by Francis Xavier Talbot, S.J., is available from Ignatius Press.

And the angel said to him in reply, "I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news..."

-- Luke 1:19



Bridges Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Bridges Foundation Board of Directors will be held after the February Magis gathering, at Webster Groves Christian Church on Saturday, February 16, 2019, from noon to 1:15 p.m. Lunch will be provided, followed by a report of the 2018 activities of the Bridges Foundation Board. After the committee reports, time will be allotted for questions and/or suggestions from the non-board participants. Following the open annual meeting, an abbreviated Bridges Foundation Board Meeting will be held.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by February 8, 2019, to Linda Leib at linda.leib@bridgesfoundation.org or 314-313-8283.

This is the newsletter of the Bridges Foundation of St. Louis. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed as a PDF file via email, free to anyone who would like to receive it. Thank you to the contributors to this issue: Linda Leib and Tom Simon.

Quarterly issues are sent late in the months of March, June, September, and December. The deadline for submission of material is on the 15th day of each of those months for inclusion in the issue to be mailed later that month. Look for your next issue around the time that the seasons change.

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of the Bridges Newsletter is March 15, 2019. Please send articles, letters, mailing list additions and deletions, and other correspondence to: Tom Simon, Editor, 1730 Derrynane, Manchester, MO 63021, or by email to tsimon@tsimon.com.