



## Press Release

For immediate release

### Inauguration of the New Reception Pavilion at Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal

**Montreal, February 13, 2025** – Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal proudly inaugurates today its brand-new reception pavilion, an innovative and eco-friendly infrastructure. Construction of the new pavilion, spanning 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> over four floors, began in the fall of 2018. Its completion marks a significant milestone in the history of welcoming pilgrims and visitors, nearly two million of whom visit this gem of religious and tourist heritage each year.

The reception pavilion stands out with its contemporary design, created to receive visitors and pilgrims in a monumental yet warm and luminous space. Now accessible at street level, it features a Gift Shop, a beautifully glass-walled cafeteria, a versatile meeting room with a capacity of 200 to 300 people, and relaxation areas. Additionally, thanks to its numerous glass ceilings and generous fenestration, it offers unique vantage points of Saint Joseph's Oratory and its dome.

"It is a joy to finally inaugurate this new reception pavilion, which will allow us to receive pilgrims and visitors in an environment that enhances Saint Joseph's Oratory—our shrine that combines beauty and rich heritage—while honoring the legacy left to us by Saint Brother André. We invite all citizens to visit us in large numbers, whether it is their first visit, or they are regulars of the shrine," said Bernard Antoine, CSC, Rector of Saint Joseph's Oratory.

The new reception pavilion stands out not only for its design but also for its ecological features. It represents a significant step forward in Saint Joseph's Oratory's commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility. The building meets the highest standards of energy performance, incorporating cutting-edge technologies such as rainwater recovery systems and superior thermal insulation, thereby reducing its carbon footprint and operational costs. Notably, it also features green roofs and prioritizes the use of local or repurposed materials.

The new pavilion also incorporates the imposing campanile, which houses the fully restored 62-bell carillon. Originally intended for the Eiffel Tower, the carillon was loaned to Saint Joseph's Oratory in 1955 for its 50th anniversary before being gifted to the sanctuary by generous donors. As the only traditional carillon in the province, it is a significant part of Quebec's heritage. The restoration has greatly improved its performance, and the addition of six new bells has expanded its musical repertoire.

"Saint Joseph's Oratory has stood proudly for over a century and is a cultural jewel in the heart of my riding, Côte-des-Neiges. Thanks to an investment of \$22 million from the federal government, we are ensuring that this legacy will live on for generations to come. This new space will offer millions of annual visitors a more immersive and enriching experience. We will continue to invest in the cultural spaces that make the heart of our metropolis pulsate." - The Honourable Rachel Bendayan, Minister of Official Languages and Associate Minister of Public Safety

"I'm delighted to see the new reception pavilion project come to fruition and open to the public. Bravo and thank you to everyone who contributed to this major project! Thanks to the new addition, visitors



from near and far, whether in search of contemplation or discovery, will be able to take full advantage of a modern, eco-responsible facility, offering a renewed experience at the heart of this emblematic site.” - Chantal Rouleau, Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action

"With a firm commitment to preserving this unique and iconic site, the City of Montréal has provided \$10 million in financial support for the major development project of which this new pavilion is a part. This project honors Saint Joseph's Oratory and our cultural metropolis. By reaffirming Montreal's status as a UNESCO City of Design and a pioneer in ecological transition, this new development blends innovation with sustainability. It reflects the city we aspire to build: one that respects its heritage while looking to the future. We invite the entire community to discover or rediscover this gem of our heritage." - Marie Plourde, Responsible for arts, heritage, gastronomy and nightlife on the Executive Committee of the City of Montréal

### **The Grand Development Project**

The Reception Pavilion marks a key milestone in the Grand Development Project, valued at a total of \$150 million. This ambitious initiative includes the reconfiguration of the gardens, the development of the museum space, and the enhancement of the Basilica's dome. These large-scale works have been made possible in part thanks to financial contributions of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada which contributed \$21,999,500 to the project under the Major Projects component of the Building Canada Fund and the Government of Quebec, which contributed \$30,800,500 through the Quebec-Municipalities Infrastructure Program. The City of Montreal (\$10 million) and numerous private donors, including the Friends of Brother André and religious communities, also contributed to financing the work. The subsequent and final phase, whose design is nearing completion and includes access to the highest viewpoint in Montreal, is expected to begin this year despite funding challenges related to rising material and labor costs.

This modernization, which expands services for pilgrims and visitors, reaffirms Saint Joseph's Oratory's status as a major tourist attraction. It continues to preserve its heritage and history while contributing to the economic development of the metropolis for the benefit of present and future generations.

For the construction of the new reception pavilion, Saint Joseph's Oratory relied on the expertise of Lemay Architecture, Elema Structural Engineering, BPA Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, MHA Civil Engineering, Version Paysage, Pomerleau, and numerous other professionals and subcontractors.

**We invite you to [download](#) high-resolution photos, the project presentation video, and technical sheets.**

- 30 -

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

**André Fortin / Mylène Forget**

Massy Forget Langlois Public Relations

Cell phones: 514 928-3828 / 514 266-2156

afortin@mflrp.ca / mforget@mflrp.ca