

Missionnaires

Their average age is **90** and a few months. Together, they have accumulated almost **seventeen centuries of religious life**, all devoted to educating, serving and loving. Some of them only use wheelchairs because their legs no longer have the strength to carry them. Some have seen their cognitive abilities slowly diminish, like a summer twilight. And all of them live with disabilities or limitations, discomforts, and quiet griefs.



And yet, in ten days or so, these valiant and magnificent elders of our community will be leaving **on a mission**, once again, showing an **availability** and an **openness** that I can testify to. *Brothers of Christian Instruction once, Brothers of Christian Instruction always!*

Allow me to share with you my perception of these missionary disciples who, from January 10 to 14, will leave two by two - as in the Gospel - to enrich with their quality of being the great inter-community fraternity of the **De-La-Salle Residence** in Laval.

Honor to whom honor is due, I begin with the **oldest**.

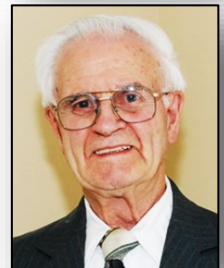
Br. Roland Chevalier, 99

The **dean of the Infirmary**, perhaps without really realizing it, remains famous for the incredible collection of **horses** that everyone has enjoyed giving him throughout his life. He is affable and gentle, still **witty** on his good days, pious, sensitive and with a deadpan sense of humor. And he remains a tenacious Montreal Canadiens fan!



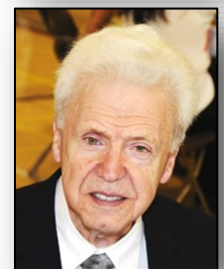
Br. Émilien Doucet, 99

The **luminous eyes** of this career bursar reflect a constant joy and an ever warm and eager **welcome** to people, including those he has never met. He loves to laugh and looks for ways to make people laugh. He nurtures curiosity, wonder, family ties, and never seems to be bored.



Br. Marcel Matte, 98

Trapper, hunter, fisherman, **outdoors adventurer** and forest hiker, he is also a magnificent poet, a contemplative and an inexhaustible conversationalist. A man of family and lineages, he still vibrates to **music** and **singing**, the passion for which he has communicated throughout his life.



Br. Normand Dessureault, 97

A lover of life, he seems never to have found the time to grow old. Theologian and philosopher, **passionate** about science and all discoveries, self-taught in computer science, artist and **writer**, his priority is to meet people and **accompany them until the end**, while respecting their vulnerability.



Br. Bruno Laroche, 96 (on January 3rd)

After 70 years of selfless giving of his talents, strength and health to the youth and community of **Haiti**, his heart and prayer continue to beat to the rhythm of this **beloved but suffering country** that he has never really left. A deep wellspring of missionary stories, he is well informed, interesting, always congenial and courteous.

Br. Roland Leduc, 94

Only three years ago, he was still going to the gym to **stay fit and independent**. A globetrotter with an assertive personality and a thousand **pedagogical experiences** in Africa and elsewhere, he is slowly adapting to his new lifestyle and rhythm. He is still very much aware and informed of current affairs.



Br. Raymond Hould, 94

With his voice no longer more than a slight whisper, **courageously** continuing to exercise his legs, he remains what he has always been: a **quiet and simple man**, patient and kind, whom we love to love and tease, always infinitely **discreet** about himself and his daily struggles with his health.



Br. Félicien Charest, 93

His second name is **availability**. All the Mennaisian regions in Canada have seen him at work, humbly and generously giving the best of himself in the **services** he was asked to provide. Reclining in his chair, he until recently devoured historical novels. And beware of his **repartees** which are sharper than you might expect!

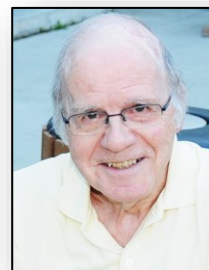


Br. Camille Tardif, 91

A man of few words, he gave meaning to his life by devoting it to **tasks of all kinds** for the good of the community or of the young people at the John Paul II High School in **Baie-Comeau** where I was his companion for three years. His physical energy still impresses me, and the **sparkle** in his eyes remains bright and astonishing.

Br. Jacques Lemire, 91

If a **book** is topical, he has read it or he wishes to do so soonest! A man of finesse, culture and contemplation, he has been a **wise man** who was the mirror image and alter ego of many a privileged Provincial. He himself took the decision to **join the Infirmary** which he enriched with his varied conversations and his contemplative mission.



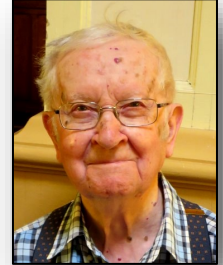


Br. Claude St-Amand, 90

In Canada, in Asia, in Africa, he leaves as a legacy the incredible **creativity** and tireless **energy** that he deployed so that the Gospel would accompany and mark **the growth of young people** via pastoral and vocational groups, theater, musicals, dance and circus art... These recollections continue to blossom in his memory and in his thanksgiving.

Br. Merville Gagnon, 89

From the Mother House community, he is a daily **Acadian messenger** of joy, life and hope for his confreres everywhere, especially those in the Infirmary. He has chosen, in all serenity, to join the group of pilgrims, **to tread the future path** near the river and to continue reading, philosophizing and offering his great **outbursts of healing laughter**.

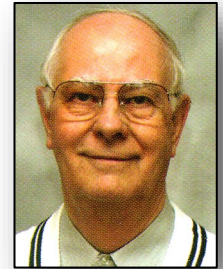


Br. Venant Paquette, 88

A dynamic teacher, an educator to the core, he has deeply marked generations of students and colleagues by his thoroughness, his pedagogy, his teasing and his ability to transmit **his work ethos**. The new Residence will offer him great opportunities to explore and participate in new fields of interest.

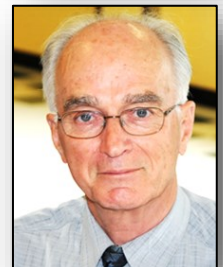
Br. Fernand Poudrier, 88

His faculties are more fragile than before, but his **heart** is as immense and generous as ever to render **untold services** that support and animate his fraternity. The departure of Brother Albert Tremblay, whose **guardian angel** he was, has left a void, but the cause of the beatification of **Father de la Mennais** provides food for research and devotion.



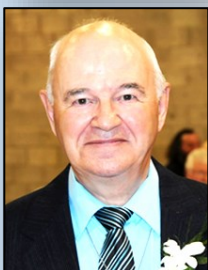
Br. Julien St-Laurent, 87

Still upright and elegant in spite of the wheelchair and growing blindness, he **listens attentively** to his recorded books and tries to reanimate the sparse memories of the **lover** of nature and of great outdoors, of the creative and meticulous **artist**, of the marvelous **teacher** of the children of the Village des Sources that he has been..., but **they** have not forgotten him...



Br. Marius Tanguay, 86

He is simultaneously **watchman** and **lighthouse**, grandfather and child, walker and rest area. His footsteps never ceased to lead him to places where hearts needed to be heard and understood, where seekers like him were thirsting for **meaning**, for **family**, for **mission**. He recently put down his bundle at the Infirmary and enjoys peace there, still keeping in touch with quality relationships.



Br. Guy Gervais, 86

He **has served the youth** valiantly and devotedly in wonderful public schools that remember his commitment. Distinguished and courteous, welcoming and fraternal, always **grateful** for services rendered, he has found poise and calm in **reading**. These same standards will follow him to De-La-Salle and will provide profound and lasting serenity.



Br. Noël Lachance, 86

From the schools of Lac St-Jean to Atkinson House, via the catechists' village in Bangadi, he has never abandoned the qualities of his **joyful and teasing personality**, his great capacity for **work**, and the pleasure of daily living with his Brothers. If his energy is not what it used to be, his simple **kindness** is still very present.

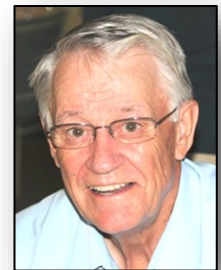


Br. Jean E. Thibeault, 84

"To whom much has been entrusted..." Three huge segments tell the story of his **colossal life**: service to students and staff in teaching, school and school board **leadership**; service to his older Brothers in the large **communities** of Quebec; and **resilient** courage in the face of health vagaries and new challenges following the amputation of his leg.

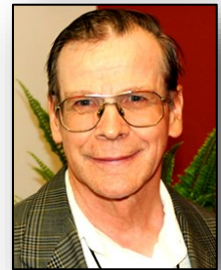
Br. Robert Larouche, 83

All **heart and kindness**, in community and at work, he aroused faithful friendships with young and old alike wherever he taught and offered the best of himself, in Dolbeau-Mistassini in particular. If his memory fails him, he loses nothing of his kindness, his big **smile**, his prayer to Mary and the cheerful notes on his **harmonica**.



Br. Georges Gouron, 81

A **frontiersman** - did he not work for nearly 50 years in Philipsburg and Bedford, in southern Quebec? - he has been passionate in his **support of young people** involved in sports and in preparing them for the sacraments. He sailed through cancer, armed with his quiet **faith**, and stayed close to his older Brothers to keep them company and journey with them daily.



Br. Gilles Ménard, 77

The commitments of this astronomy teacher at college level amount to a real **constellation**: missionary experience, German language, parish pastoral work, animation in a nursing home... A providential star led him among his **Brothers in the Infirmary**, first as a beneficiary, then as a carer and now as a leader. Once in Laval, he will devote himself to his most important mission: **people**.

Brothers, I admire you and, with infinite affection and respect, I ask your permission to **allow me send you all together, once again, on a mission.**

May the encounter with Christ at the very heart of your vulnerabilities, according to the intuition proposed by the CRC, **lead you to the peripheries into new relationships to bear witness.**

Be assured that we, the members of **your Family**, will be wholeheartedly with you in this new venture.

*Thanks to Br. Robert Smyth
for the translation!*

br. maurio

