

August 4, 2019

FATHER NARCISSE MARTIN SERVANT OF GOD!

FATHER NARCISSE MARTIN SERVANT OF GOD! It is with great JOY that I announce to you that at long last, we have begun the PROCESS OF CANONIZATION OF FATHER NARCISSE MARTIN! We have taken the first step on Wednesday July 17. This appeared to be a small step, but with time, it may prove to be a GIANT STEP.

What happened on July 17? On behalf of the Father Martin Society, I transmitted to our new Archbishop Wilton Gregory the formal request that he open the CAUSE OF SERVANT OF GOD for Father Narcisse Martin, who as you know served the people of the greater Waldorf Area for 29 long years: 1894-1923. Those exact words about Father Martin serving the greater Waldorf area have been written below the new painting by Orlando Lagman, which was blessed by Bishop Michael Fisher on Saturday February 2nd 2019, Candlemas celebration and day of opening of our newly renovated Hall, also renamed Father Martin Hall.

As a few of you know, since 2010 I have been one of the two co-founders of the Father Martin Society. The other co-founder is Msgr. Bill Parent, former Pastor of St Peter's Church in Waldorf. It is in that capacity of co-founder of the Father Martin Society, and with the approval of Msgr. Bill Parent the other co-founder, that I submitted the Cause of Servant of God to our Archbishop Wilton Gregory.

How does one become a Saint (with a capital "S")? Though we all hope to become a saint (with a small "s"), most of us, including myself, have little knowledge of the canonization process determining who can be declared a "Saint". One of the most famous Saints recognized by the Church in the last 100 years is Saint Teresa of Calcutta. You may recall that 40 of us from OLHOC went on a pilgrimage to Italy to coincide with the conclusion of the canonization process of Mother Teresa. For me personally, it was a great JOY to be present at her canonization on September 4, 2016. I will never forget having the honor to be concelebrating the Canonization Mass with Pope Francis, hundreds of priests from all over the world, including Msgr. John Enzler (current CEO of Catholic Charities), three of my classmates of St John XXIII, and being surrounded in St Peter's Square by hundreds of Missionaries of Charity radiating JOY... Maybe one day, people from the Waldorf area will have a similar privilege and honor to participate at the canonization of Saint Narcisse Martin... For those of us above the age of 70, we are most unlikely to be able to attend physically (most canonization processes take more than 30 years)... but we may all pray that God willing, we may participate in such celebration from heaven with all the angels and saints!

As the cause for Servant of God is currently under review by Archbishop Gregory and his staff, it would be inappropriate for us at this time to share any major information contained in the documentation that had been prepared exclusively for Archbishop Gregory and his review. However, remain assured that we will keep you informed of further developments as and when appropriate. If you now have any questions/comments, or if you would like to volunteer to assist the Father Martin Society (e.g. assist with the Society's website, or the new strategy for communications), please do not hesitate to contact me personally (after Sunday Mass) or make an appointment to see me.

Finally, I encourage everyone of our parishioners to consider joining the Father Martin Society. Many of you are already members. For those of you who might desire to become a new member but do not know how to do so, it is very simple. Just answer the triple question:

Do you support the three main objectives of the Society?

1. Promote Devotion to the EUCHARIST (including formation of first communicants, making the Eucharist the center of our personal relationship with Jesus, and encouraging Adoration, in silence and songs, of Jesus fully Present in the Blessed Sacrament, whether exposed on the altar, or present inside the Tabernacle);
2. Promote Vocations to the PRIESTHOOD and support existing-diocesan priests (including through Prayer) and
3. Promote INTERCULTURAL UNITY through the Eucharist, which makes us ONE IN CHRIST.

If you respond YES to each of the three above questions, WELCOME TO THE FATHER MARTIN SOCIETY! You have just become one of our newest members. The only thing you have to do is to send an email to fathermartinsociety@gmail.com with a copy to pastor@olhoc.org and from then on, you will receive all the news about Father Martin Society. There are no annual fees for membership. It is totally free. You will also receive invitations to attend special events organized by the Society. WELCOME!

I suggest that you now open your Bible and go to "Chapter 3 of St Paul's Letter to Colossians" and read Verses 1 to 5, and 9 to 11. This is the second reading at all week-end Masses (Year C, 18th Sunday of Ordinary Time). Read it slowly as in Lectio Divina (re our own Scripture Prayer Groups on Tuesdays at 10 am and Fridays at 7.30 pm). Short quotes are here below if you wish to go for a simpler reflection: "*If you were raised with Christ, SEEK WHAT IS ABOVE, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God... THINK OF WHAT IS ABOVE, NOT WHAT IS ON EARTH... Put to death then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, —and the greed that is idolatry... Stop lying to one another...*" As in baptism, St Paul encourages us to get rid of our OLD SELF, and to put on our NEW SELF! Every day is a new day. St PAUL concludes: "*Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free... BUT CHRIST IS IN ALL AND ALL*". Can you see any connections between this beautiful Chapter 3 of Paul's Letter to Colossians and the three ABOVE objectives of the Father Martin Society, which aims at promoting the Legacy of Father Narcisse Martin?

Heavenly Father, send your HOLY SPIRIT to fill our hearts with YOUR LOVE! COME LORD JESUS, help us to be in communion with you and one another, to be truly united in YOU as brothers and sisters!

COME HOLY SPIRIT! COME! Help us in all our daily decisions! HELP US TO SEE CHRIST IN EVERY PERSON WE ENCOUNTER TODAY!



*One in Christ,
Father Alain*