

The following statement has been made by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops following the canonization of Saint Brother André on October 17, 2010.

*(Rev.) Msgr. Patrick Powers, P.H.
General Secretary*

The Church in Canada rejoices that one of our own, Brother André Bessette, 1845 – 1937, a lay member of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, has now been recognized as Saint Brother André. He was a humble man, dedicated to serving the poor and the needy in Montreal during the early part of the 20th century. His witness is particularly important today for our society, when so many across our country are struggling, whether to find work and improve their life situations, or to find comfort in their physical, emotional, psychological or spiritual pain, or to find courage and encouragement in order to restore their appreciation of their own human dignity.

Just as Saint Brother André has helped many find healing and hope, the Catholic Bishops of Canada pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to raise up in our midst many generous men and women to bring comfort to the suffering and hopefulness to all who are isolated and vulnerable. We pray too that the example of Saint Brother André will help the young and all our society to appreciate better the special opportunities for generous service and holiness that are possible in dedication through the religious life.

In Saint Brother André there is a wonderful reminder of how the uneducated, the poor and those who are least visible in our communities can be such important forces of faith and goodness in our Church and in our society. No matter how unimportant or insignificant one's own life may seem, and despite all the obstacles that may confront us, God can make each of us an extraordinary witness through faith in him and charity toward our neighbour.

Saint Brother André, pray for us.

18 October 2010