FOLLOWING THE Snowshoe Priest

A Capital Campaign for the Development of the Baraga Educational Center

ARTWORK BY LORE ANN PARENT
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In May 2012 our first Bishop of the Diocese of Marquette was declared Venerable by Pope Benedict XVI. Following that declaration the Baraga Chapel was built to ensure that we complied with the Norms for Canonization, making Bishop Frederic Baraga's remains publicly accessible for private veneration. The next step in the canonization process is beatification. Beatification would allow for more public veneration in the geographic area in which Bishop Baraga ministered.

I come to you with a personal invitation. I would like to ask for your prayers and financial support as the Bishop Baraga Association launches a $500,000 capital campaign for the development of the Baraga Educational Center. This will be established in the Baraga House located at 615 S. Fourth St. in Marquette, MI.

The Bishop Baraga Association is committed to creating an education center that will become a pilgrimage destination, to preserve the artifacts used by Bishop Baraga during his ministry and comply with the Norms for Beatification. This center will capture the essence of Baraga: the man, the priest and the Bishop as he ministered throughout the Great Lakes Region. Here you will find an opportunity for prayer, meditation and inspiration.

It is my desire as the thirteenth Bishop of the Diocese of Marquette to follow in the footsteps of our first Bishop, Venerable Frederic Baraga as we continue the mission to allow the Holy Spirit to form every one of us into Spirit-filled evangelizers. As shared in my pastoral letter entitled Transforming Fire: A New Pentecost to form Spirit-Filled Evangelizers, to evangelize means helping people encounter Jesus by sharing the Gospel message so that they make a personal decision to follow Jesus in faith. The Baraga Educational Center will provide an opportunity for people to deepen their faith as they follow in the footsteps of the Snowshoe Priest.

As your Bishop, I have made a personal, financial commitment to this project. The Bishop Baraga Association Advisory Board has also pledged 100% support. I would ask you to prayerfully consider a financial contribution to this project.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. John F. Doerrler, STD, JCL
Bishop of Marquette
The Life of Frederic Baraga

Frederic Baraga, was born in Slovenia on June 29, 1797. He was ordained to the priesthood on September 21, 1823. Inspired by St. Clement HofBauer, he came to the United States in 1830 to devote his life to the native peoples of the Upper Great Lakes.

Father Baraga’s labor began among the Ottawa People in Little Traverse Bay. Two years later he established a mission in Grand Rapids, but moved farther north to minister to the Chippewa at LaPointe, Wisconsin in 1835. His last major mission was founded in 1843 in L’Anse, on Keweenaw Bay where his ministry was expanded to serving miners, the lumber community and their families. Baraga was consecrated as the first bishop of Upper Michigan on November 1, 1853. From 1854 to 1866 Baraga resided in Sault Ste. Marie until the See was moved to Marquette.

For 37 years Baraga moved about in a vast triangular territory of over 80,000 square miles. His goal was to make God known and loved by all men. Totally devoted to the Indians, he learned to speak their languages, and wrote a dictionary of the Ojibwa Language that is still in use today. No forest, no island in this vast territory was unknown to him. Shooting perilous rapids in a fragile canoe and trudging through swamps and frozen wilderness he went from village to village seeking souls, appropriately earning him the title of “Snowshoe Priest.”

Bishop Baraga died on January 19, 1868 after a life filled with exalted heroism and undiminished zeal for souls. Today his remains rest in the Bishop Baraga Chapel at St. Peter Cathedral, Marquette, Michigan. He was declared “Venerable” on May 10, 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI. This is a significant step towards beatification and canonization for God’s Faithful Servant.
The Baraga Educational Center

The house in which Bishop Baraga resided as Bishop of the Diocese of Marquette was originally built in 1853 to be used as a church and home. It was a two-story, clapboard home located behind St. Peter Cathedral which had been built in 1864. Unadorned and sparse, the house reflected the man himself. He moved there in 1866 where he died peacefully on January 19, 1868.

In 1871 the house was moved to its present location. It was attached to an existing building and the entire structure clad in brick. The Fleury family made it their home from 1909 until 1988. The Diocese reacquired it and it has remained relatively unused and vacant.

The Bishop Baraga Association is committed to creating an education center that will become a pilgrimage destination, insure preservation of the artifacts and comply with the Norms for Beatification. This center will capture the essence of Baraga, the man, the priest and the Bishop as he ministered throughout the Great Lakes Region. Here you will find an opportunity for prayer, contemplation and inspiration.
Our Vision

The first floor will be open to the public. To the right of the staircase is the room where Venerable Bishop Baraga worked, slept and later died. The original floors, walls and woodwork will be preserved.

Two rooms to the left of the staircase will showcase artifacts pertaining to his life - ranging from Slovenia, to his ministering to the Native Americans, to items pertaining to his priesthood and his time as the bishop of the Marquette Diocese.

A third room in the back, which was not part of the original house, will be utilized as a small gift shop with computer stations that will allow access to digitized letters, papers, and photos of Baraga’s life. Professional documentaries produced in partnership with a national production company, will be available for viewing. An accessible bathroom is already onsite.

The upstairs rooms will house the Bishop Baraga Association, a conference room, classroom, workspace, and storage. An existing small bathroom will be updated.

When completed the Baraga Educational Center will provide visitors with a comprehensive view of Venerable Bishop Baraga’s life and a chance to walk on the original floor and follow in his footsteps.
Father Baraga was among the first evangelizers to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It was his desire that every person have an encounter with Christ which would draw them into a deeper relationship with Him. Father Baraga saw the face of Christ in everyone. He met and accepted people where they were on their spiritual journey.

Father Baraga knew the importance of daily prayer. He lived the example he taught others by rising daily at 3:00am and spending three hours a day in prayer. Bishop Baraga called all to be missionaries ... to spread the Gospel.
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Ways To Give

The way you give to the Baraga Educational Center Capital Campaign will depend on the size of your gift and your financial situation. Len McKeen, Executive Director at the Bishop Baraga Association, will be happy to answer your questions and to help you design a gift that works for you. You can reach her at (906) 227-9117.

Gifts of Cash: Give a one-time cash contribution or make a multi-year pledge with scheduled payment. Checks may be made payable to the Bishop Baraga Association. All gifts are tax deductible.

Appreciated Securities: There are tax advantages in giving certain appreciated securities to the capital campaign. In general, an income tax deduction is allowed for the full fair market value of these gifts, and the donor will not pay tax on the appreciation.

Planned Gifts: If you are interested in making a bequest or other deferred gift to the Bishop Baraga Association Capital Campaign, please use our legal name, Bishop Baraga Association.

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