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Bernard LaFreniere, C.S.C.

Brother André

According to Witnesses

Seven Conferences
to the
Brothers of Holy Cross
in Austin, Texas



Saint Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, Canada,
attracts more than 2,000,000 visitors annually.



Brother André with his friend and first biographer
Colonel George H. Ham in January, 1921.

The Miracle Man

Anyone who writes about Brother André today can easily feel like a fourth-generation interpreter, trying to explain different authors' analyses of what witnesses said more than 50 years ago.

Indeed several people who knew him wrote on his life and work on Mount Royal. The first was Father George A. Dion, who published a contemporary chronicle in the *Annals of Saint Joseph*, which he began at the Oratory in 1912.



George A. Dion, C.S.C.
1852-1918

This priest had been the general procurator of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Rome from 1892 to 1896, and for some time wrote in the *Annals of the Association of Saint Joseph*, a Holy Cross magazine founded in France in 1870 — the very year young Brother André entered the community.

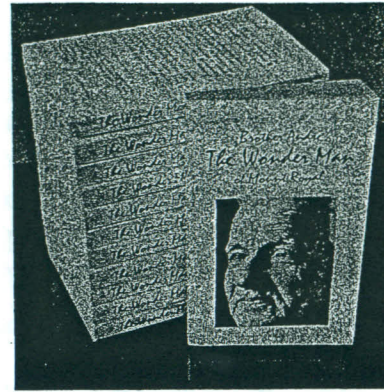
Father Dion was also the provincial superior in Canada when the first Oratory was built. A tall man, he was quite impressive and serious, and Brother André was a bit shy in his presence; but as the years went by, he became one of André's most dependable supporters.

Anticlerical laws passed in France in 1903 by Education and Cult Minister Émile Combes closed more than 2,000 Catholic schools and dispersed many religious communities. Most of Holy Cross brothers and priests came to the United States and Canada. Their *Annals of the Association of Saint Joseph* were discontinued. After nine years, however, Father Dion decided to resume publishing them at Saint Joseph's Oratory with the first chronicle of the Shrine. Today this chronicle has become a basic source of information about Brother André and the beginning of his Oratory.

Two books on his life and work were published already in 1922. One was written by Colonel George H. Ham, a Protestant gentleman who served as publicity director for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The other was published in French and in English by Arthur Saint-Pierre, a sociology professor at the University of Montreal. A few years earlier, he had written a long article on the healing of Martin Hannon from Quebec City, a case that was much publicized in the newspapers in 1910.

A Catholic writer, William H. Gregory, wrote another small book "for the American pilgrims," a few years later. *Brother André of Saint Joseph's Oratory* was printed in New York in 1925.

These three books and the chronicle were the only works on Brother André when he died in 1937. Then Father Henri Paul Bergeron wrote his biography that became a best-seller in French as well as in English; 50 years later, *The Wonder Man* was still selling nearly 40,000 copies a year. Very few biographies published half a century ago can



muster the same interest, and Brother André has surely become one of the most popular Canadian citizens of his time.

We read these books now with pleasure. But we all know that a biography is somewhat like a tinted window or a grid between us and the person. Behind every phrase, there is a witness, someone who knew Brother André personally. Some were close friends who shared in his thoughts, his projects, his prayer, his dreams, his everyday joys and struggles, and all the events that took place.

With this in mind, we realize how wise the Church is in providing an opportunity for the witnesses to declare under oath, and then to correct and rewrite what they have said about a Servant of God. That is what makes a beatification process so important for future generations.

In the following pages, therefore, we will quote as much as possible from what the actual witnesses said in their own words.

Miracles

In Montreal, if you ask people, "Who was Brother André? What was so special about him?" The most common answer will be: "He performed miracles." When someone in

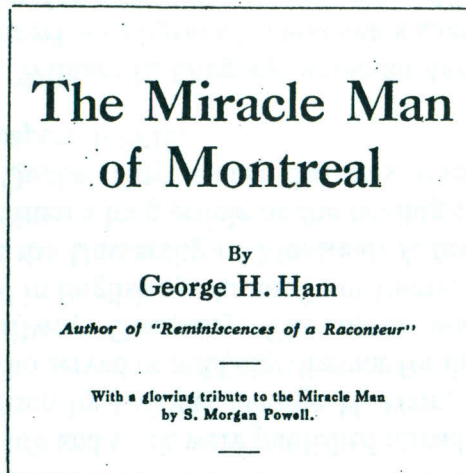
Canada says, "I cannot do that; I am not Brother André," it means, "I DON'T PERFORM MIRACLES."

So, the very name Brother André is associated with the notion of MIRACLES. No wonder Colonel Ham entitled his first biography: "*The Miracle Man of Montreal.*"

When we read the thousands of pages of the acts of the beatification process, we are struck by the same fact — the notion of MIRACLES is everywhere. The witnesses answer every question to the best of their knowledge. But the longest answer, where it seems that they could speak on, and on, and on forever is question No. 50, the question about the MIRACLES. For instance, the first witness answered 49 questions in 20 pages, but he needed another 20 pages to answer question No. 50.

What Is a Miracle?

Now, before reading what they wrote, we could share a few thoughts on what a miracle is in theology and in the Christian tradition. It touches something very deep, maybe the most basic and the most original intuition of the existence of God. A miracle is intimately connected with faith.



The original text of the Gospel, uses in Greek, either "semeion" or "dynamis" for miracles. The former means a *sign* and the latter, an act of *power*. Two English words, "dynamite", which means a *power* • *ful* explosive, and "semantics", the study of the *sign* • *ification* of terms, stem from the same two words. Miracles, therefore, refer to an act of POWER, a SIGN given by the Lord, and they may well be the most primitive intuition of the existence of God.

If you go to the Pacific Islands, in Polynesia for instance, you will find one word that seems to be at the root of every form of religious belief. The word is "Mana", and it refers to the idea of a supernatural power. Not only the concept but even the word is pretty much the same in several languages, not only in the Pacific Islands, but elsewhere in the world. Thus the Bible in Polynesian translates a "miracle" by "mana" — an act of Power.

The first Canadian aborigines were found in North America some 29,000 years ago. The Algonquins, in Montreal, also believed in a Supernatural Power whom they called "Manitou." Indeed, thousands of years before Christ, men and women were searching for God, and the living God manifested himself in SIGNS of his Power. His prophets Elijah and Elisha performed miracles in the ninth century B.C.⁽¹⁾ Miracles were also reported in the time of Jesus,

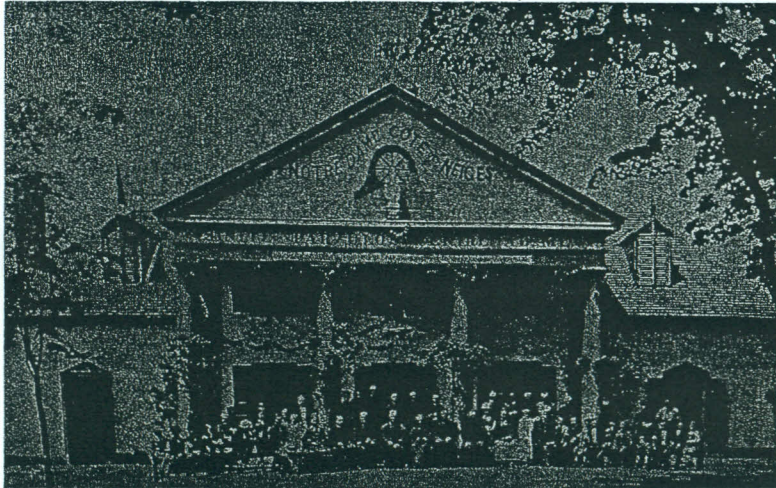
(1) See 1Kings 17 and 2Kings 2-5. Elijah worked a miracle on behalf of a widow who fed him in a time of famine; her meal jar and oil jug never ran dry. He raised her dead son to life. In the same way, his disciple Elisha raised a woman's son to life after praying to Yahweh. In Elisha's presence, a widow's oil cruet flowed until she had enough to repay her creditor. The prophet also healed the water in Jericho, multiplied the loaves and cured Naaman's leprosy.

throughout the history of the Church, and they are still found today.⁽¹⁾

Two Common Mistakes

There are two common mistakes about miracles.

One is to try to possess, or to control the “Mana.” Magicians have tried to do this in every culture, but the God of the Bible never submitted to magicians.



Notre Dame College in Cote-des-Neiges from 1869 to 1882.

Another mistake is to make a miracle a condition, or pre-requisite before faith. One says, “Unless I see a miracle, I will never believe.” The Gospel says the opposite: “In that

(1) The Gospel reports 35 of Jesus’ miracles, of which 17 are physical healings. Saint Peter and Saint Paul performed miracles, as well as many other saints after them: Saint Macarius in Egypt, Saint Brigid in Ireland, Saint Anthony of Padua in Italy, Saint Vincent Ferrer in Spain, Saint Martin of Tours in France, and so many others.

town, Jesus did not perform many miracles because of their lack of faith.”⁽¹⁾ Indeed miracles are not the proof of faith, but it is faith that makes them possible, and they can be seen only through the eyes of faith. Brother André as a believer enabled them to happen according to the will of God.

With this in mind, let us now go back to his life story as told by the witnesses.

The First Miracles



Brother André in his early thirties.

It is difficult to tell exactly when the first healings took place. It seems they began early in his religious life. The first printed document dates back to when he was only 32, and in fact tells of events even earlier.

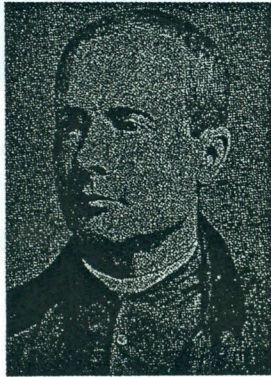
Brother Michel Girardeau wrote to the *Annals of the Association of Saint Joseph*, the Holy Cross magazine published in France:

“On Sunday, March 31, 1878, I had someone drive me to Cote-des-Neiges” — a Montreal suburb, also known as Snowhill — “for the regular meeting of the Provincial

(1) Matthew 13:58. Also, “He could work no miracle there... He was amazed at their lack of faith.” Mark 6:5-6.

Council. There, I asked little Brother André to fetch me some of the oil from the lamp of Saint Joseph, the oil about which he had told me marvelous things. The good Brother André did not believe he was authorized to give me what I was asking for, and I had to turn to Brother Ladislaus, who had greater authority, being the sacristan of Notre Dame College. That evening I applied a few drops from my precious vial on my wounded leg while invoking Saint Joseph, asking him to heal me and promising him, if I were healed, to go to Communion the next day in thanksgiving. The following day, as I woke up, I felt no more pain; and after two days, only a scar remained. Since then, I resumed my regular work.”

The author of this letter was among the first Holy Cross missionaries sent by Father Basil Moreau to Canada in 1847. The first group consisted of eight brothers, four sisters, and two priests,⁽¹⁾ most of whom were in their early twenties. Brother Michel was 19 years old and never went back to France. Eventually he became one of the pillars of Holy Cross in Canada and one of André’s most dependable friends. He died in 1900, four years before the building of the original chapel on Mount Royal.



Michel Giraudeau, C.S.C.

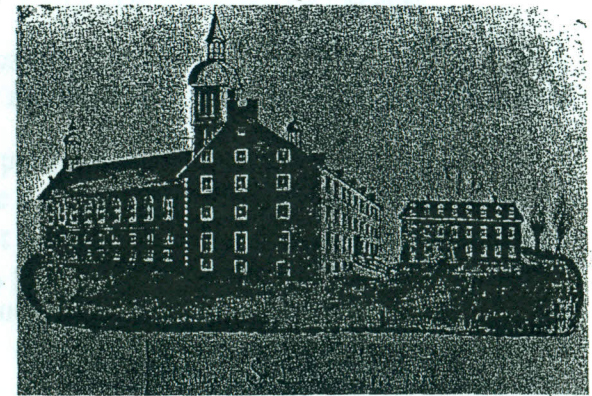
(1) Bishop Ignatius Bourget of Montreal asked for teaching brothers only, but Holy Cross sisters, brothers and priests worked together. A priest led the group; they helped one another and shared in the same budget. Among the newcomers, Brother Louis and Sister Clarisse Vermont were siblings, which made collaboration all the more natural.

Brother Michel was also a writer. That we know so many details about the life of the first sisters, brothers, and priests of Holy Cross in Canada is mostly due to his pen. In May of 1878, when he wrote to the publisher of the *Annals of the Association of Saint Joseph*, he was 50 and a provincial councillor. In the same letter, he went on telling about four other healings which had taken place earlier, when André was maybe 30 or 31 years old.

“I am not the only one who was healed with the oil of Saint Joseph. Last year, Brother Alexander had a more serious wound than mine. He had a fever, his whole leg was swollen and dark; the poor man could not stand on his feet and the doctors could do nothing. He began a novena during which he anointed his leg daily with Saint Joseph’s oil. All of a sudden, he was relieved from his chronic pain.”

A third case told by Brother Michel in his letter reads as follows:

“A servant in our house” — St. Laurent College, about three miles north of Mount Royal — “Mr. Joseph Bouthiller, was completely paralyzed by rheumatism in his arm. Brother André told him to rub his arm with some oil from the lamp of Saint Joseph.



St. Laurent College from 1862 to 1882.

Bouthiller followed the advice and that very same day was most astonished when he recovered the use of his arm."

Fourthly, "A good father of a family who had nothing but his daily work to earn a living for his family was losing his eyesight. His eyes were swollen, and he could not stand the daylight. The only medicine he used was some Saint Joseph's oil and, on the second day, he was cured and resumed his work, while blessing the adoptive Father of Jesus."

Still another healing was reported in Brother Michel's letter:

"Mrs. Grenier had diphtheria, a terrible disease that causes anguish, desolation and death among the families. She had lost all hope when she was given some Saint Joseph's oil. She anointed her throat, and her trust in the protector of Christian families paid off instantly. She was healed, and no one else in her house caught the disease."

Brother Michel ended his letter saying: "I will stop now. If I were to tell of all the wonders worked here by our good and powerful Saint Joseph, I would never end." That letter was dated May 9, 1878.

These five cases are most interesting since Brother André was still young. He had taken final vows only on February 2, 1874; and when the first healings took



place, he still had 26 years to go before the first chapel would be built across the street from the school.

And as the miracles which first happened in 1877 during the early years of André's life as a Brother of Holy Cross continued until his death in 1937, they occurred for six decades.

In Holy Cross

All the while Brother André continued spreading devotion to Saint Joseph, whom Pope Pius IX had proclaimed the Protector of the Church on December 8, 1870, and whom the Congregation of Holy Cross had similarly honored since its beginning.



Father James F. Dujarié
1767-1838

Father James Francis Dujarié founded the Brothers of Saint Joseph in 1820, to teach the boys in the aftermath of the French Revolution. In 1837, they merged with the Auxiliary Priests, a community founded two years earlier by Father Basil Anthony Moreau in the city of LeMans, France. In 1841, Father Moreau added a society of sisters to his Congregation of "Holy Cross" — "Sainte Croix" being a suburb near the city of LeMans.

Father Moreau had dreamt of starting a place of pilgrimage to Saint Joseph at Charbonnière, the farm house

near LeMans where he had established the novitiate of the Brothers. Even in Father James Dujarié's time, in the early 1820's, the devotion to Saint Joseph was well established among the Brothers.

In the chronicles we read that during Brother André's novitiate a flu epidemic had started to spread. The novice director — not Brother André this time — had installed a statue of Saint Joseph in plain view and had decided that the local community would make a novena to the Patron Saint of the Congregation. The epidemic stopped, the sick recovered and resumed their regular duties.

This is the kind of prayer Brother André found when he entered Holy Cross. Many other brothers and priests loved Saint Joseph and invoked him with the same confidence.

The early pupils of Notre Dame College, in Cote-des-Neiges, remembered how Brother André, while cutting their hair or in conversations with them, spoke often about the earthly father of Jesus. He told them to invoke Saint Joseph and to have confidence in him. The youngsters loved Brother André especially in his early years, when he was closer to them. Although he was a simple man, he was friendly, lively and quick-minded. So they related well with him, and many remained good friends for life.

Miraculous Cures

Once, apparently when André was still a young brother, a youngster had a bad fever and the doctor told him to stay in bed in the infirmary. Brother André went to see him and



A class of Notre Dame College in 1903.

said: "You're not sick, you little lazy bones! Go and play with the others!" The boy did not wait to be told a second time. He jumped out of bed, dressed, and went to play. The superior and the doctor were amazed, and although Brother André explained that Saint Joseph had cured the boy, they told him not to do this any more. But the word spread that, in fact, the boy WAS very sick and that Brother André had HEALED him with his confident prayer to Saint Joseph.

This is very much in the manner of Brother André: "Get up, little lazy bones! Go and play with the others! You're not sick any more!" Such phrases were terms of affection among our old folks!

Community tradition also tells how in 1884, when Brother André was 39, a woman suffering from rheumatism came to see him. He was busy scrubbing the floor, and when someone told him why she had come, he answered

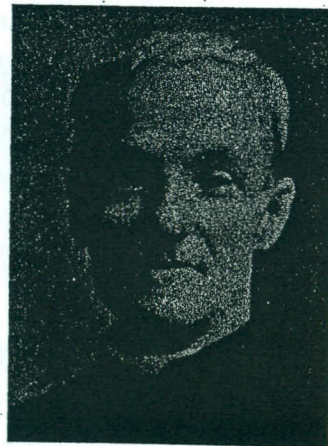
simply, "Let her walk!" and went on scrubbing the floor. But people insisted; so Brother André looked at the woman and said, "You're not sick any more. You may go back home." And the woman was healed.

According to the witnesses, 1884 was also the time when growing numbers of sick people started visiting the school regularly; so for at least 53 years Brother André lived with a reputation for healing.

Let us now go back to what the witnesses said in the beatification process in the early 1940's.

In the Words of the Witnesses

One said "I witnessed one of Brother André's miracles. A man was brought to the Oratory, and he was tied up to a stretcher. Brother André came out of his office, looked at him, and said to those who had brought him up the hill, 'Untie him and let him walk.' Then, without even waiting to see the outcome, he entered the residence for his noon meal. Indeed, the man was healed, which caused quite a sensation. But Brother André had gone his way and was probably eating lunch with the rest of the community."



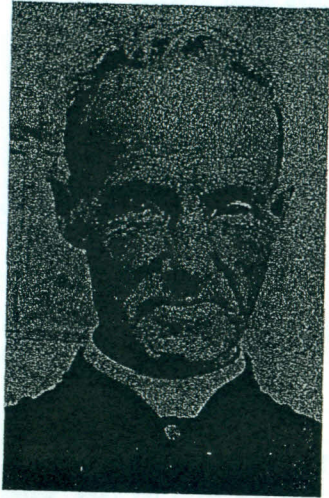
This story shows the humility of André and how he never tried to attract attention to himself. Yet, he himself said, "A healing is good, not only for the person who is healed, but for all those who hear about it."

Another witness said, "One day a man came to see Brother André and said to him, 'When I invoke Saint Joseph, I never get anything. But when I ask you, then I get what I want.' Brother André was so upset that he started trembling and quivering, and he showed the man to the door." To him, what the man said was almost a blasphemy, as though a miracle could be effected by human power.

Indeed this is an all-important feature of Brother André. He got angry for only one reason — when people said HE had a power to heal them. The fact that the favors came from God, through Saint Joseph and not from him, was the most important point in his life. And he always put his full energy into defending that.

In the process for beatification, the Devil's Advocate asked us if that was not a lack of fortitude, a show of anger, and therefore of weakness. In the answer, we compared this anger with the scene when Jesus cast the merchants out of the Temple, in the second chapter of Saint John: "Jesus made a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money-changers' coins, knocked their tables over..." and so on. Jesus was not only meek, he was strong in holding to essential points. One may find another example in the 23rd chapter of Saint Matthew, when he called the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites seven times in a row. Jesus was addressing the religious leaders of his time and his language

was at least as strong as that of Brother André when he showed to the door the man who claimed that miracles came from him and not from God!



In 1910, at the age of 65.

Another witness was there the day that the chaplain to the King of England came to see him. The chaplain wanted to be nice and told him that the King himself had heard about his work and that he sent him his greetings. Brother André listened to all that reverently for two or three minutes, and then he said, "You will excuse me; many sick people are here today!" He had not at all been impressed.

Here is another fact as told by one of the witnesses:

"Mr. Sénécal was in his thirties, and he worked for the railway company. He had injured his leg and went to see Brother André one year after the accident. He paid several visits, but to no avail. Meanwhile his wound extended from his foot up to his knee, and surgeons decided to amputate his leg, because the bone itself had turned black from the ankle to the knee, and they couldn't do anything. Sénécal decided to wait until his novena was completed. Then he went to the hospital twice for the amputation. But since there was no room for him in the hospital, he went back home and the amputation was again postponed. Brother André then advised him that he should come and make a novena with

him in his room over the original chapel. He remembered that the stench of the wound was awful, and it was late in the fall and too cold to open up the windows.

"One night Brother André was invoking Saint Joseph, and he prayed through the Precious Blood of Our Lord, asking that Sénécal might be healed. And all of a sudden the man felt that he was. He stood up, and as soon as the prayer was finished, started jumping up and down with joy. On the next day," the witness said, "a regular driver of Brother André drove the man to the hospital, so that the doctors might witness the healing. But none of them wanted to recognize Sénécal in spite of all his identity papers. They said it was absolutely impossible that such a serious wound would be healed so perfectly in so little time."

Another witness told this case:

"Mrs. Forest, from Joliette" — a small town 60 miles north of Montreal — "had a paralyzed arm following the birth of a child. She could not move her arm, so I drove her to see Brother André and asked him to rub the woman's arm with a medal of Saint Joseph. He did not want to do it; instead, he asked me to rub her arm with a Saint Joseph's medal." — The fact here is that, many years before, he had rubbed the arm of a little girl, and someone had reported the case to the superior, who had told Brother André never to touch females, even on the forearm, for fear that people would accuse him of being immodest. He never did it afterwards. — "So," the witness said, "I rubbed the woman's forearm and kept looking at Brother André, in order to join him in his prayer. All of a sudden, her arm

became flexible again; she was healed. That was in the first years of the original chapel.”

Father Clement, the first priest to serve at Saint Joseph's Oratory, told of still another case:

“A man was crippled after his two feet had been crushed so badly that only the skin, as it were, kept them together. Before they brought him to the Oratory, the men made two wooden boxes so as to protect his feet. When Brother André saw him, he started rubbing the wooden boxes. When I saw him doing this I said, ‘What are you doing, Brother André? Do you really believe that, by rubbing these wooden boxes, you will make his feet grow?’ But Brother André did not answer. He did it his own way then, and again on the next day, and on the third, and on the fourth day. Then he said to his patient, ‘Now, let us remove these boxes, I believe your feet are doing quite well.’ So they removed the boxes. Indeed his feet were healed.”

This case is particularly interesting, because Father Clement was a somewhat nervous and authoritarian man. Brother André was simple, a poor Canadian peasant from the 19th century. But he was well adapted to the people. Father Clement thought he knew better and reacted to such

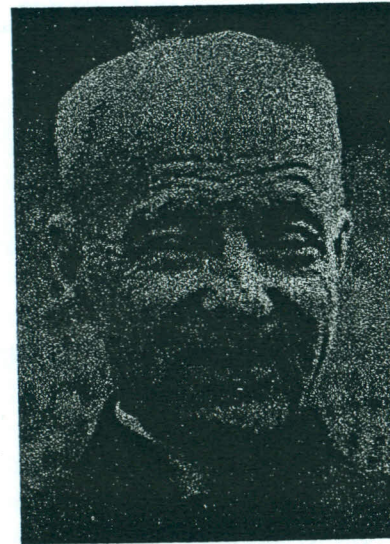


Adolphe Clement, C.S.C.
1874-1940

a naive situation. However, he respected the ways of André, who once again proved to be right.

His Sense of Humor

Another feature of Brother André as a person was his keen sense of humor. Although he had very little schooling, he was bright, keen, and quick-minded, especially in grasping funny situations.



April 19, 1927.

One day he saw a woman picking some little green apples at the bottom of the hill. When she finally entered his office, she asked to be relieved from a stomach pain. Brother André could not help saying, “Why don't you eat some little green apples?” The woman blushed and had to admit her petty theft.

The sick who came to see him were not always so quick-minded. Here is another example told by witness Joseph Oliver Pichette:

“One morning, when I was with Brother André in his office, a young man came and his leg was sore. He said to Brother André, ‘I've been coming to the Oratory for a year and am ending another novena today. If I'm not healed,

I'll have my leg amputated!' 'Do you want me to call the surgeon?' Brother André asked, and then he said, 'What results did you get out of visiting your doctors?' The man didn't answer and so Brother André made a deal: 'Well, listen. You begin one more novena today, and if your leg doesn't get better, I'll cut it off myself.' But the man got very angry and left the office.

"So I went to talk to him," the witness said, "and I explained that in fact, Brother André had almost promised him that he would be healed. I told him to go back and to apologize to Brother André: 'Go tell him you'll make the novena as he asked.' Brother André repeated the same words as above. The man made the novena and was healed."

The same witness told another similar story:

"Emile Laporte was 26 years old. He worked as a presser in a clothing factory. His feet were so swollen that the doctor told him he was very ill and eventually could die of this illness. So I drove him to see Brother André. The latter talked with him gently for a while. Then he looked at him and said, 'What movement do you have to perform on the pressing machine?' Then the man started pulling his leg up and down, and up and down, and up and down. I found that funny and said to Brother André, 'Well, obviously he CAN do his work.' 'Surely,' Brother André said with a big smile. 'You come back tomorrow.' The man did come back, and he was healed. Brother André was 85 years old at the time."

The Non-Catholics

It was said many times that Brother André practiced ecumenism out of his own common sense at a time when even the word was not well known. Several witnesses pointed out that people around him were surprised that he took so much time welcoming Protestants, Jews, Masons, and others, who at the time, were often considered enemies of the Catholic Church. In fact, he not only welcomed them, but visited them in their homes. With his good, sound judgment, he could cross barriers and touch people's hearts, and many of these people were healed.



Brother André in 1920.

Here is one such story, again in the words of a witness:

"Brother André told me that, as he was coming back from New England, a priest told him he should go and visit an old man who was sick. In fact, the old man was a Mason. So Brother André showed him a medal of Saint Joseph and explained that many people had been healed by Saint Joseph after rubbing themselves with this medal. The old man agreed and Brother André started rubbing him with the medal. Finally the man was healed."

Many cures were not instantaneous. Sometimes Brother André had to insist before people were renewed in faith and then healed. Here is another case involving a Mason:

“One evening I drove with Brother André to the house of a Mr. Lefebvre. He had told me that the man was paralyzed. Brother André entered the room while I stayed with Mrs. Lefebvre. She told me that her husband was a Mason and that he hated all priests and brothers. But he could not talk, due to his paralysis. We could hear Brother André; he tried to help him say the names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. But the man would not repeat the names. On the way home, I told Brother André what his wife had told me, that he was a Mason. Brother André did not answer. But he said, ‘This man will never speak unless he says the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.’

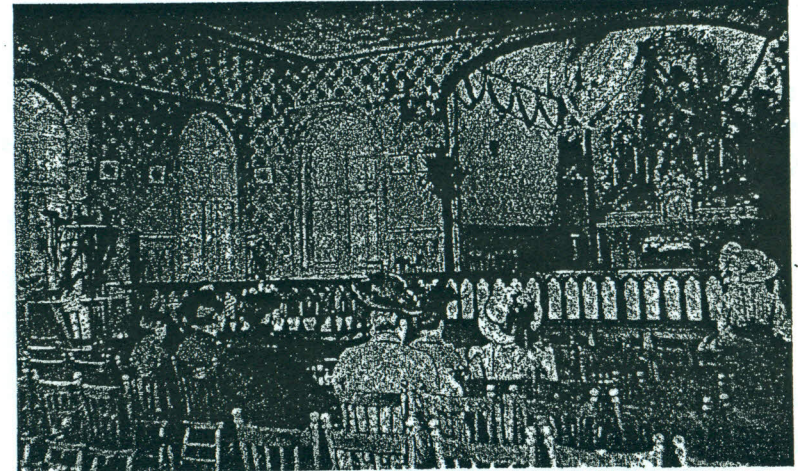
“In fact, the man resisted and he remained paralyzed for two more years. The pastor of the parish went to see him frequently, but to no avail. One day he said, ‘It’s really too bad! You will die without the sacraments; and after you die, your body will not even be brought into a church.’ On the next day, the man finally asked for a piece of paper and he wrote that he wanted to see the priest. As soon as he began his confession, he recovered his speech. He lived several years after he was healed.”

The least we can say is that this man was hard to heal!

André suffered from stomach pain. When it became more acute, he tended to be short-tempered. Here is one such case in the words of witness Joseph Pichette:

“A Protestant lady came to see Brother André and I was with him in his office. She kept talking, and talking, and talking so much that Brother André could not even say a word. He finally looked at her and said, ‘If you don’t want to listen to me, then you don’t need me. So why don’t you

just go away.’ He rang his little bell so that someone else entered. Then Brother André had tears in his eyes and said to me, ‘If this woman can forgive me what I just did, she will be healed.’ About 10 minutes later she came back to thank Brother André. She was healed.”



The interior of the original chapel in 1909.

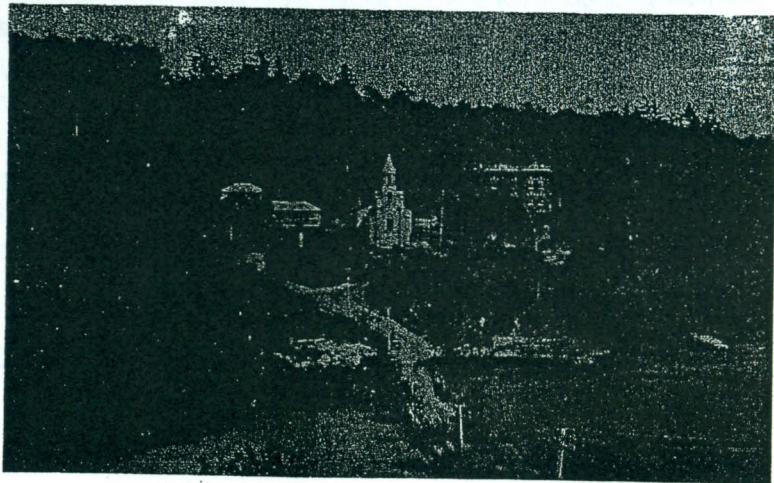
Here is another case which happened while Brother André was visiting his family in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. This story was also told by Joseph Pichette, the first witness in the beatification process.

“A man had been undergoing treatments for a long time with a physician. He suffered from bone tuberculosis, and his backbone was in very poor shape. He suffered a lot. When people heard that Brother André was in town, they said they would drive him to the Miracle Man whenever he wished to see him. But the man said he did not believe much in all that stuff and that he had no confidence in healings.

But his wife insisted, and he finally agreed that one of his friends would drive him to see Brother André.

“Actually, the man could walk only with crutches and very painfully. He also had to wear a plaster orthopedic corset. After talking to him, Brother André said, ‘Give me your crutches and start walking.’ But instead, the man hesitated. So Brother André himself took his crutches away from him. Then the man walked and asked Brother André if he would not also remove his plaster corset. The latter answered that he was going to go to his house on the following day, and that he would see to it. The next day, he asked, ‘Could you come to Montreal during the summer?’ The man said he would.

“Meanwhile, the doctor had told the man’s wife that her husband was soon going to die of his illness. However, the man went to Montreal and saw Brother André again. He was in pain and completely bent over. But Brother André



A general view of Saint Joseph's Oratory in 1912.

removed his plaster corset. The man had also a wound on his back, due to his bone tuberculosis.

“While in Montreal, the man visited the Oratory each day for two or three weeks. Brother André during that time used some Saint Joseph’s oil and rubbed his back. Finally the man was healed. His spine straightened up; he could stand straight again and walk normally.

“From then on, this man was perfectly healed and traveled every year to the Oratory to thank Saint Joseph and Brother André. The latter also visited him every time he went to see his family in Rhode Island.”

As in the Time of Jesus

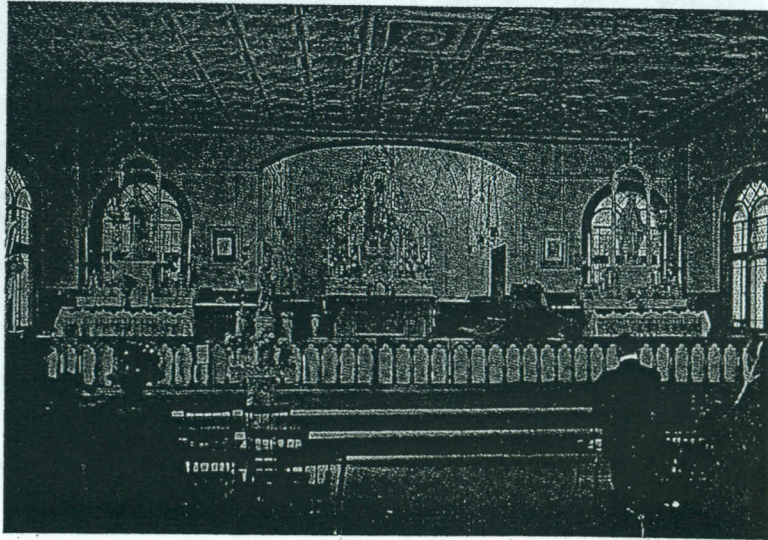
On certain days, several cures took place and we may well imagine that the atmosphere on Mount Royal must have been somewhat like that in Capernaum in the time of Jesus. People even forgot to say “Thank you.” A witness told the following two stories:

“About 1911, on a Sunday afternoon, a young man came walking on two crutches. Both his legs dragged as he took each step. Brother André talked to him and then said, ‘Give me your crutches and walk!’ The man obeyed. Finding himself on his legs, he became so nervous and excited that he did not even say ‘Thank you.’ He ran down the steps to the street and took the trolley car back home without a word, while people looked at him through the window.”

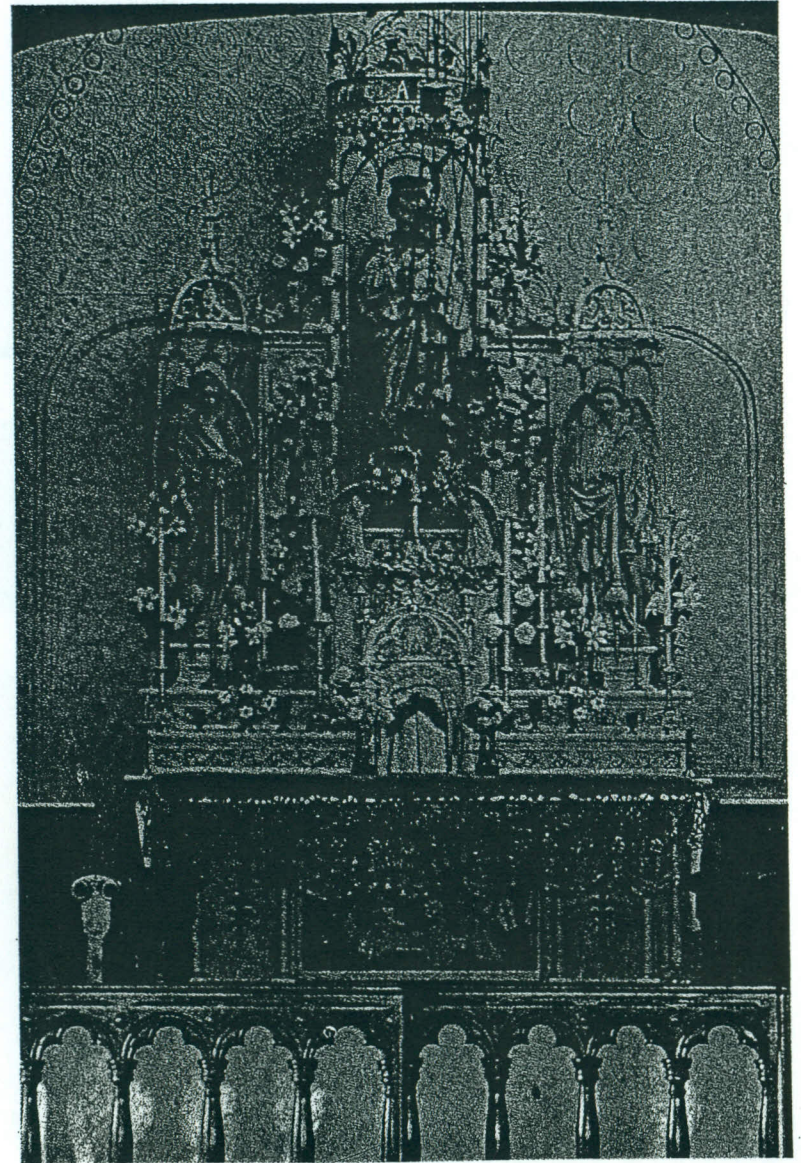
Only a half hour later, a man came and told Brother André that his arm was paralyzed, that he could no longer use it. André told him to put his hat on his head. The man tried once, and then a second time, and then a third time.

“Brother André told him, ‘Make a novena. You will begin by going to confession and to communion.’ But the man answered, ‘It’s been 25 years since I stopped going to confession.’ ‘You may come and sleep in my room tonight’, Brother André answered, ‘I’ll find a priest for you.’ And the man did come back. He went to confession and to communion on the next day.” His paralysis disappeared.

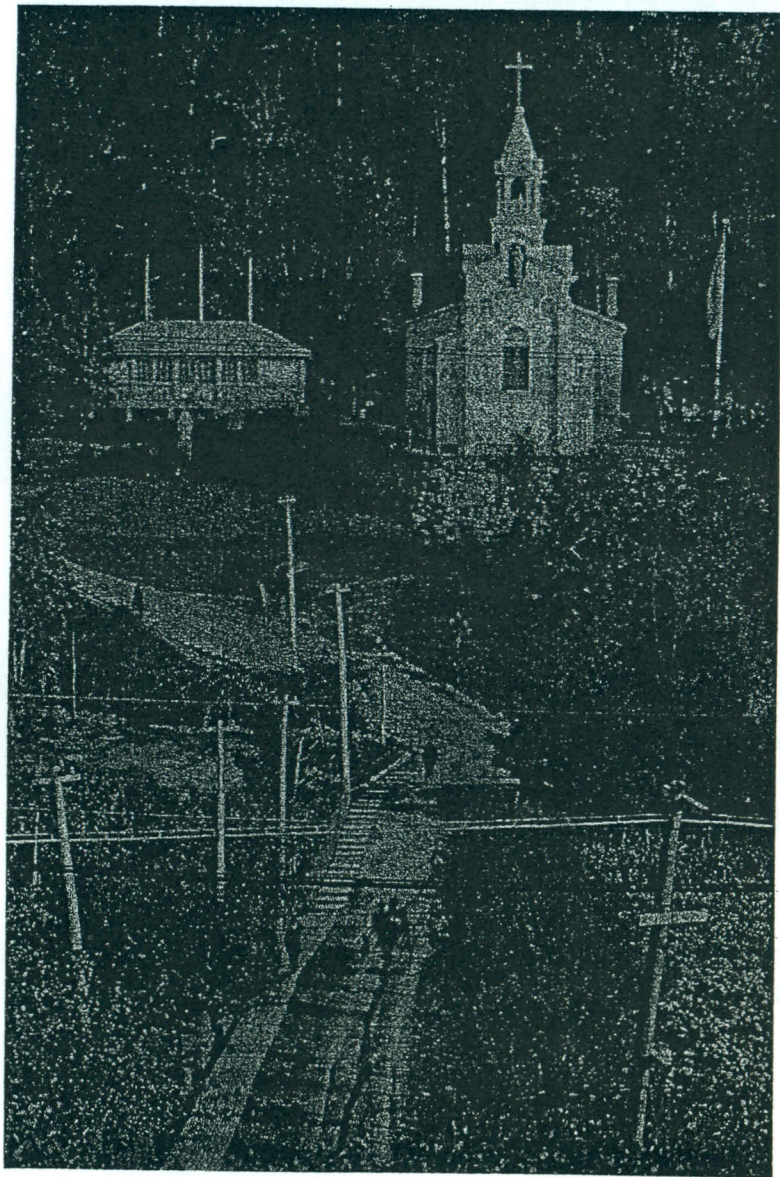
During the beatification process of Brother André, a total of 125 cases of healings were told by the witnesses. These are only a few examples.



The interior of the original chapel in 1910.



Detail of the altar in 1910.



Saint Joseph's Oratory in September, 1910.