

Open Churches Day 2012: on June 3, you're invited!

Montréal, May 31, 2012 – To mark the start of the summer season, the Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec (CPRQ) has decided to be associated with an activity organized by the Belgium-based Open Churches Foundation (www.openchurches.eu) and invite all places of worship in Montréal to open their doors to the public on Sunday, June 3, 2012. Special activities, including guided tours, concerts, lectures and more, will be offered. The event is an opportunity for churches to promote their rich heritage, making it available to local communities as well as to the many tourists visiting the city.

Montréal alone is home to some 500 places of worship (churches, chapels, temples, synagogues). They account for 20% of Québec's 2,750 listed buildings built before 1975.

Montréal's religious buildings are an outstanding part of the city's heritage. They are internationally renowned for their architectural value, characterized by diversity, originality of inspiration, and construction quality. They also have historical value, due to the rarity and age of some buildings, the symbolic nature, or their roles in the history of the surrounding community. They have value as overall works of art, which includes architecture but also paintings, sculptures, furniture, stained glass, silverwork and pipe organs created by Québec's finest artisans. Lastly, they have urban-planning value, as landmarks and gathering places that have structured neighbourhoods across the city.

By inviting Montréal's places of worship to join in this annual event, the CPRQ seeks to help increase accessibility for a larger number of them, as well as raise public awareness of the major issue of the survival of Montréal's religious heritage, all while making it possible to reach a wider audience.

For more information, please visit the home page of the CPRQ website, www.patrimoine-religieux.qc.ca.

– 30 –

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