

## COMMUNIQUÉ

### COVID-19: Crescendo of the Bells

Montréal, le 27 mars 2020 – Archbishop Christian Lépine of Montreal and Auxiliary Bishop Marc Pelchat of Québec wish to send a message of hope to as many people as possible during the fight against this pandemic and have asked Catholic churches in their dioceses to ring their bells for 10 minutes, starting at 12 noon, beginning Sunday, March 29 through every Sunday until Easter.

Although church doors remain closed in response to preventive measures for COVID-19, the two Church leaders wanted to offer a symbolic gesture of support: to ring the bells of all churches.

« During this time of Lent, it is a way of demonstrating our solidarity and fraternity with individuals, families, especially the most vulnerable, the sick and their loved ones, and of recognizing the dedication of the health-care personnel and all those ensuring the security and wellbeing of our city», declared Archbishop Lépine. « This 'Crescendo of the Bells' is a sign of hope and of solidarity, signalling that the Church stands with the people and the city once known as "The City of a Hundred Bell Towers". May the ringing of the bells remind us that God loves us, that Christ is alive and wants us to be alive!», he added.

Bishop Pelchat, interim head of the Archdiocese of Quebec, immediately supported the initiative that was adopted earlier this week by the Catholic bishops of France: "The Church wants to strengthen the fraternity manifested today, and to continue its mission of inspiring peace and hope. We want familiar bells to warm everybody's heart, especially those of the elderly, who may feel more lonely, worried and in need of reassurance during this period of confinement."

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