

La **Fiducie**
du **patrimoine**
culturel des
Augustines



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

The archives of the Augustinian Sisters of Canada added to the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register

Québec City, May 24th 2023 – During the 216th session of its Executive Board, UNESCO approved the nomination of the archives of the Augustinian Sisters of Canada to the Memory of the World International Register. This recognition showcases "the international interest and the exceptional value of this documentary heritage" for humanity.

The archives of the Augustinian Sisters of Canada are among the 64 documentary heritage items from five continents entered in the register today. They join prestigious documents already inscribed such as papyri, peace treaties, the Rosetta Stone and the Bayeux Tapestry.

The chair of the Board of Trustees of the Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines, Gertrude Bourdon, states, "It is with great pride that we share this momentous news. After being listed in the Canada Memory of the World Register in 2020, the archives of the Augustinian Sisters received international recognition by a jury from various countries, under the aegis of UNESCO, an institutional guardian of the heritage of humanity. This honour serves as a reminder to the world of the important responsibility we have today to preserve and promote."

For more than three centuries, the Augustinian Sisters have created and preserved an exceptional documentary heritage that sheds lights on the adaptation of health care in North America and the expansion of a first-class hospital network. These archives document the contribution of hundreds of women dedicated to caring for the sick and establishing health care institutions that are still active today, starting with the first one founded in Québec City in 1639. The inclusion of the archives of the Augustinian Sisters in the UNESCO Register highlights that without them an important part of the history of Canada and the New World would be lost.

"Since the founding of their first hospital in New France, the hospitaller Sisters have always carefully preserved what would one day tell the story of their work," says Sister Lise Tanguay, Superior General of the Fédération des monastères des Augustines du Canada. "Taking care of the sick, day and night, has always been the main priority for these healers and hospital builders. UNESCO's recognition reminds us that the documents that reflect this dedication to men, women and children from all walks of life have universal value."

"For over 375 years the Augustinian Sisters documented a significant part of our collective history. Their work and accomplishments were remarkable, including documenting the development and organization of our

healthcare system through their extensive archives. I'm delighted that these archives, conserved at Le Monastère des Augustines in Québec City, are now a part of the Memory of the World International Register – thereby situated alongside the most significant documentation of the heritage and history of humanity” – Michel Bonsaint, Québec Government representative at the Permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO.

In 2018, the Augustinian Sisters entrusted their archives to a social utility trust that they set up. This documentary heritage is now preserved and made accessible at the the Monastère des Augustines archive centre in Québec City. The collection represents a linear kilometre of archives and historical books from the twelve monastery-hospitals founded in Quebec. The public is welcome to check out the full collection at the archive centre or a part of the collection on the web portal at archives.monastere.ca.

About the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO is the link between Canadians and the vital work of UNESCO - the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Through its networks and partners, it promotes UNESCO's values, priorities and programs in Canada, and gives a voice to civil society specialists internationally. The CCUNESCO reports to the Canada Council for the Arts.

About Le Monastère des Augustines

Le Monastère des Augustines occupies the former wings of the Hôtel-Dieu de Québec's monastery (1639), which was the origin of the first hospital in America, north of Mexico. Completely restored and refurbished, and open since August 2015, Le Monastère offers visitors a unique resourcing experience, as well as several original ways to get in touch with the Augustinian Sisters' heritage: unique accommodation, museum, archive center, global health and cultural activities, mindful eating, boutique, specialized global health care treatments and room rentals.

About the Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines

Created by the Fédération des Augustines, the Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines is a trust recognized as a charitable organization. Its mission is to safeguard and promote the heritage and memory of the Augustinian Sisters of Québec, for the entire population and for future generations.

— 30 —

For more information, an interview can be arranged with Denis Robitaille, the person in charge of submitting the application form for the archives of the Augustinian Sisters to the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register. Mobile: 581-999-4252 Email drobotaille19@outlook.com

SOURCE: Le Monastère des Augustines
www.monastere.ca

INFORMATION:
Caroline Maheu
Director, Marketing
cmaheu@monastere.ca
985-581-3457