



Minneapolis & Tours Blog

A friendship between the cities of Minneapolis & Tours

Marie De L'Incarnation: A bit of Tours in North America

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At the dawn of the 17th century, a woman was born in Tours who would bring a bit of Minneapolis's sister city to North America. Her name was Marie Guyart, now better known as Saint Marie de L'Incarnation, and I discovered her part in Canadian history on a trip to Quebec City. She entered the monastery of the Ursulines, an order of Roman Catholic nuns dedicated to educating young girls, in Tours in 1631. In 1639, she traveled across the ocean to Quebec City and founded an order of Ursulines in North America. When she arrived in New France she kissed the ground of her new land and never returned to France.

She wrote the constitutions and rules of the Ursulines of Quebec in 1647 and was also responsible for writing dictionaries, catechisms and prayers in the main native languages. She was one of the first female missionaries in North

America and her work has been instrumental in the understanding of life in 17th century New France.



The Ursulines built a small monastery in what is today Quebec City and opened their doors to anyone in need of food and shelter. Part of the monastery is the most imposing example of 17th century architecture still standing in Canada. The chapel altar dates from 1730 and is considered a masterpiece of Canadian wood sculpture. It is also part of one of the most important complexes of religious buildings constructed in Canada prior to 1880.

Marie died in Quebec in 1672. She was declared blessed by Pope John Paul II in 1980 and made a saint by Pope Francis in 2014.