



Year of St. Paul Archdiocese of Toronto

Archbishop Collins has designated St. Paul's Basilica, Toronto; St. Paul, Alliston; St. Paul the Apostle, Toronto; and Sts. Peter and Paul, Mississauga as places of prayer and pilgrimage in our Archdiocese where a Plenary Indulgence may be granted in the canonically prescribed manner.

St. Paul's Basilica:

Established in 1822, St. Paul's is the mother church of the Archdiocese of Toronto. The first St. Paul's was completed in 1824 on the same site as today's Basilica. After the Diocese was created in 1841, Bishop Michael Power used St. Paul's as his unofficial Cathedral until the completion of St. Michael's Cathedral in 1848. Bishop Power and over 800 immigrants who died from a typhus epidemic in 1847 are buried in a mass grave on the church grounds, the first Catholic Cemetery in the Archdiocese.

In 1998, Fr. Tom Day began the process of restoring the church, and since July 2000, Monsignor Brad Massman, the current pastor, has overseen the completion of the interior and exterior restoration of the building to its original splendor.

On August 3, 1999, at the request of Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic, Pope John Paul II elevated St. Paul's to the rank of Minor Basilica by an Apostolic Decree.

The congregation of the Basilica is, as it was since its beginning, composed largely of immigrants and the poor. The parish remains, as has been since its founding, a dynamic spiritual and social "home" with outreach programs including the Cardinal Carter Breakfast Club for Children, St. Paul School Snack Program and the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank.

St. Paul the Apostle Church, Alliston:

St. Paul's Church in Alliston was solemnly blessed and opened for public worship on January 1, 1877. The parish's three acre cemetery was purchased two years later.

The history of St. Paul's has been closely associated with Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish (established in 1885), also in North Adjala as the population development occurred further south than originally expected. Over the years both parishes have had, or been, "mission parishes" as the population continued to shift. In 1981 the two churches were merged into St. Paul the Apostle, Alliston. In 1950 the original cemetery was relocated to an already established Catholic cemetery.

In 1960 St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School opened in Alliston and in 1976 the parish officially celebrated its centennial. In the early 1990s the church was replaced. Holy Family School was completed in 1991, and the Parish Centre was officially blessed in 1992 by Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic.



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St. Paul The Apostle Maltese Parish:

St. Paul the Apostle was established in 1930 for the Maltese Catholic community by Fr. Alphonse Cauchi, O.E.S.A., with the assistance of the Maltese Canadian Society of Toronto and their families. By the time of his death in 1943, the parish was flourishing in the Toronto Junction. In 1942-1943, Fr. Cauchi was assisted by a young priest, Fr. Thomas Fulton, who later became the Bishop of St. Catharines.

In 1951, the Franciscan Minors of Malta agreed to take care of the parish and Fr. Lawrence Bonavia was appointed pastor, a position he held until 1970. These were years of rapid increase in the number of Maltese immigrants to Toronto.

In the 1950s, a new and larger Church was constructed and officially blessed on September 8, 1956. The hall and rectory were completed in 1960.

In 1999, the Missionary Society of St. Paul agreed to assume pastoral responsibility for the parish. Parishioners were concerned that the Maltese National Parish would be lost, but thanks to the dedication and understanding of the Missionary Society of St. Paul the parish continues to be the only Maltese National parish in North America. They have always, and continue to welcome people of other nationalities and acknowledge that their parish has been enriched and enlivened by the inclusion of these new parishioners.

In 2005, the parish celebrated its 75th anniversary. One of their major projects for the occasion was the commissioning and installation of ten stained glass windows depicting the life of St. Paul.

Saints Peter and Paul Parish:

Saints Peter and Paul is a large, thriving parish in “downtown Mississauga”. It was solemnly dedicated and blessed on November 28, 1982 by Bishop Pearse Lacey.

Over the years, the parish has had several pastors (Fathers Pfliger, Newton, Walczyk, Paranas and, since 2006, Mnyagatwa) and associate pastors, both English and Italian speaking. On June 29, 2006 the new hall was blessed by Bishop John Boissonneau

In the past 25 years, the City of Mississauga has grown in size and population and welcomed many immigrants from around the world, changes reflected in the Sts. Peter and Paul parish community. There are currently 6 Catholic schools situated within the parish.

Plenary Indulgence for Bi-Millennium of St. Paul

On May 12 2008 Pope Benedict XVI issued an Apostolic Decree stating he would grant the faithful a Plenary Indulgence on the occasion of the two-thousandth anniversary of the birth of the Apostle Paul. The Plenary Indulgence will be valid throughout the Pauline Year: June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009:

“With the imminence of the liturgical Solemnity of the Prince of the Apostles”, says the decree, “The Supreme Pontiff ... wishes, in good time, to provide for the faithful with spiritual treasures for their own sanctification, that they may renew and reinforce ... their purpose of supernatural salvation from the moment of the First Vespers of



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the aforementioned Solemnity, principally in honour of the Apostle of the Gentiles the two-thousandth anniversary of whose earthly birth is now approaching.

“In fact, the gift of indulgences which the Roman Pontiff offers the Universal Church, facilitates the way to interior purification which, while rendering honour to the Blessed Apostle Paul, exalts supernatural life in the hearts of the faithful and spurs them on ... to produce fruits of good works”.

The means to obtain the Plenary Indulgence are as follows:

“Plenary Indulgence may be gained by the Christian faithful, either for themselves or for the deceased, as many times as the aforementioned acts are undertaken; it remains the case, however, that Plenary Indulgence may be obtained only once a day.

“Christian faithful from the various local Churches, under the usual conditions (sacramental Confession, Eucharistic communion, prayer in keeping with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) and completely unattached to any form of sin, may still obtain the Plenary Indulgence if they participate devotedly in a religious function or in a pious exercise held publicly in honour of the Apostle of the Gentiles: on the days of the solemn opening and closing of the Pauline Year in any place of worship; on other days determined by the local ordinary, in holy places named for St. Paul and, for the good of the faithful, in other places designated by the ordinary”.

The document concludes by recalling how the faithful who, “through sickness or other legitimate or important reason”, are unable to leave their homes, may still obtain the Plenary Indulgence if, with the soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin and with the intention of observing, as soon as they can, the usual three conditions, “spiritually unite themselves to be a Jubilee celebration in honour of St. Paul, offering their prayers and suffering to God for the unity of Christians”.