



*Sainte-Marie  
among the Hurons*



MEDIA RELEASE

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## **First Light poised to illuminate history for its 22<sup>nd</sup> year**

Holiday-themed event at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons remains a seasonal favourite

MIDLAND, ON: First Light, the beloved candlelit holiday event, is returning to historic Sainte-Marie among the Hurons in Midland, Ontario. Huronia Historical Parks will transform the reconstructed 17<sup>th</sup> century mission into a magical holiday experience from November 24 to 26 and December 1 to 3, illuminating the historic site with thousands of candles.

Guests will make festive memories as First Light transports them back in time to a world of holiday charm with live musical performers, unique activities, and lively historic demonstrations. Guided by lantern-lit pathways, visitors will enjoy the historic buildings, dressed up for the holiday season with fresh greenery and festive décor – all bathed in the beautiful amber glow of candlelight and cozy fires.

“First Light to Sainte-Marie among the Hurons is an exciting, one-of-a-kind holiday experience for people of all ages and it’s great to see it return,” said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. “With a variety of family friendly events and activities, I encourage everyone to make the trip to Midland. Ontarians who stay overnight in the area while visiting can claim up to 20 per cent of eligible travel accommodation expenses through our Ontario Staycation Tax Credit.”

After two years of reduced event programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons is excited to host First Light’s traditional array of outstanding family activities and performers. Returning favourites include Ruth Sutherland playing traditional harp music in the Church of Saint-Joseph, hand drumming by Chris Walser in the longhouse, and the energetic fan favourite, Doug Feaver, performing holiday folk tunes in the chapel. Activities for families include quill pen writing, candle-making demonstrations, storytelling and much more.

For those who enjoy holiday shopping, more than 50 exceptional crafters and artisans will be located throughout the Brébeuf Event Centre, indoor museum and restaurant hall. Sainte-Marie’s Flint and Timber Gift Shop will also be open and offering charming holiday finds.

“We’re delighted to be back,” says Will Baird, General Manager of Huronia Historical Parks. “This event offers tremendous economic impact to the Heart of Georgian Bay region, attracting repeat visitors from across Ontario, the United States and the world – it’s just a great way to kick off your holiday season.”

Visitors have been invited to register for an event timeslot online from 5:30 pm to 9 pm. Parking will be available at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, as well as Walmart in Midland, where shuttle buses will be running throughout each of the six evenings.

This year, visitors will also be treated to a special experience on Sainte-Marie’s outdoor Canadiana patio.

“Thanks to our exceptional partnership with the Martyr’s Shrine, The Big Canoe food truck will be serving favourites like hot dogs, poutine, and breaded cheese curds,” says Candice Moreau, Manager of Marketing and Visitor Services for Huronia Historical Parks. “With a roaring fire, roasted marshmallows, live music, and great food, the patio will offer an amazing ambiance under the stars.”



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First Light has strong ties to community groups, and many will be involved in this year's celebration. Community choirs will lift holiday spirits with performances on November 24 and December 1. In addition, community partners, including the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre, will be offering presentations and demonstrations throughout the event. Sainte-Marie among the Hurons also asks that visitors bring non-perishable food donations, with the aim of filling a large canoe in support of the local Salvation Army Food Drive. Huronia Historical Parks would also like to thank the generosity of our sponsors: Tay Township, Newmarket Tay Hydro and Kool and Rock FM.

For more information, or to RSVP for First Light, please visit [SainteMarie-events.ca](http://SainteMarie-events.ca).

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## **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

- A panoramic view of Sainte-Marie among the Hurons during First Light, an evening event that invites visitors to experience the reconstructed 17<sup>th</sup> century mission by candlelight.
- Ruth Sutherland, the traditional harp musician, performing for a captive audience in the Church of Saint-Joseph during First Light.
- Children enjoying quill pen writing in one of the candlelit historic buildings during First Light at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons.

## **MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

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