

## Ne ratitsihenstakweniios ne Kahnawake The Pastors of St. Francis-Xavier Mission

### Ratitsihenstatsihonwe The Reverend Jesuit Fathers

Pierre Raffeix .....1667-1671  
Jacques Frémin .....1671-1682  
Jacques Bruyas .....1682-1684  
1688-1693  
1699-1709

Claude Chauchetière .....1684-1688  
Jacques de Lamberville ...1693-1695  
Pierre Choleneq .....1695-1699  
1711-1722

Julien Garnier .....1709-1711  
Pierre Langrené .....1722-1723  
Pierre de Lauzon .....1723-1727

1729-1734  
Joseph-Frs de Lafiteau ...1727-1729  
Jacques de la Bretonnière .1734-1735  
Luc-François Nau .....1735-1743  
J.-B. Tournois .....1743-1751  
Antoine Gordan .....1751-1752  
1753-1755

Nicolas Degonnor .....1752-1753  
J.-B. de Neuville .....1755-1759  
Joseph Huguet .....1759-1782  
Jean-Baptiste Well .....1782

### Oktihatitsihenstatsi Diocesan Clergy

J.-B. Dumouchelle .....1783  
Pierre-Antoine Gallet ...1783-1784  
Laurent Ducharme .....1784-1793  
Antoine Rinfret .....1794-1802  
1808-1814  
Antoine Van Felson .....1802-1808  
Pierre-Nicolas Dufresne ...1814-1819  
Joseph Marcoux .....1819-1855

### Ronatasotarhon The Reverend Oblate Fathers

Eugène Antoine .....1855-1864  
Nicolas-Victor Burtin ....1864-1892

### Rawension Diocesan Priest

His Exc. Msgr Guillaume Forbes  
1892-1903

### Ratitsihenstatsihonwe The Reverend Jesuit Fathers

Samuel Granger .....1903-1904  
1906-1913  
1922-1923

Arthur Melançon .....1904-1906  
Joseph Gras .....1913-1922  
Onésime Lacouture .....1923-1927

Conrad Hauser .....1927-1932  
1936-1937

Wilfrid Ménard .....1932-1936  
Réal Lalonde .....1937-1951

Georges Brodeur .....1951-1955  
Albert Burns .....1955-1956

Horace Labranche .....1957-1963  
Léon Lajoie .....1963-1990

Louis Cyr .....1990-

## Father Léon Lajoie, S.J.

(39th pastor of St. Francis-Xavier Mission: 1963-1990)

**Jacques Bruyère, S.J.:** Father Lajoie, you served as pastor in Kahnawake for 27 years. What brought you to this mission?

**Léon Lajoie, S.J.:** As a Jesuit, I must answer: my superior! I had already spent two years as a missionary in Ethiopia. After my ordination, after two short periods in Kahnawake, I was finally appointed as an assistant in 1961.

**J.B.:** All in all, how long have you stayed here?

**L.L.:** As superior and pastor, from Nov. 16, 1963 until 1990. Add to that my eight years as assistant, and you get the figure 35 years in all. (Only the Rev. Joseph Marcoux - 1819-1855 - spent more time in Kahnawake, JB).

**J.B.:** What did Kahnawake look like in 1961?

**L.L.:** It was a big village, with a lot of wanderers in the United States, looking for jobs as steel-workers. Here in town there was the Post Office, a small hospital, a school and the Convent of the Sisters of Saint Ann. As for the rest it was mostly residential. But I have seen the town getting organized: the Social Services, the Youth Center, other schools, the Knights of Columbus Hall, the Kateri Hall, the Caisse Populaire, a new hospital, the arena, etc. Along with the Band Council, I always encouraged all these creations. It took its toll on my health... Maybe during my few leisures. I visited too many prisons and hospitals...

**J.B.:** What was the most important event during your life here?

**L.L.:** I must say, without hesitation, that it was the Beatification of Kateri Tekakwitha in Rome, on June 22, 1980. What a joy to be present at this magnificent ceremony with so many Mohawks from Canada and the United States! I felt the same pride as theirs: the pride of having given a saint to the world! In my heart, I wished that many other Mohawks would imitate the good Kateri.

Another unforgettable event was the restoration of the church in 1965. The parishioners contributed so well then, in time and money. Many bystanders also came to see our discoveries under the main floor. We found a real cemetery there with 367 bodies. But one had to see our church after this thorough cleaning. It gave me many worries... joys even more!

**J.B.:** Do you still feel as the "capitaine" of the ship of Kahnawake?

**L.L.:** I was the first to call all the men here by "mon capitaine". The name finally stuck to me. I thank the Lord for letting me navigate for so long... "Sail, sail on smoothly... my ship".