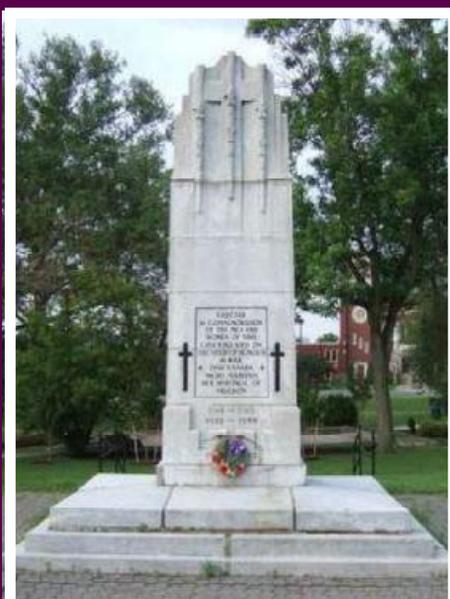
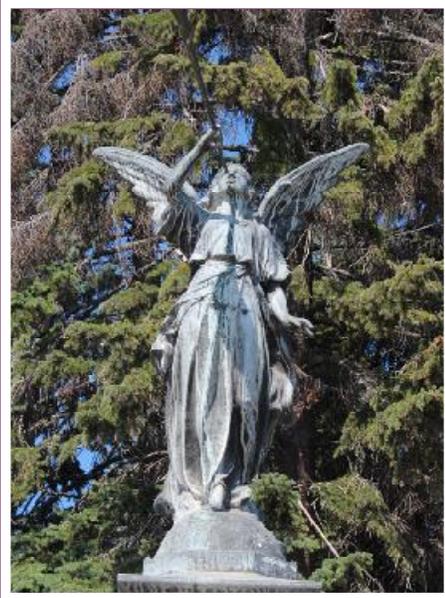


SYMBOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THAT ARE DISPLAYED ON THE MAJOR CENOTAPHS OF THUNDER BAY



Commentaries by Msgr. Pat Stilla
2021

Our Unique Cenotaph on the Grounds of St. Andrew's R.C. Church

I wish to draw your attention to one of the most unique and beautiful Cenotaphs in Thunder Bay. Despite the fact that it is clearly visible to all who visit the downtown North core, it is often overlooked by our citizens and by visitors to our City and rarely, if ever, is it mentioned or visited on Remembrance Day! It is located in front on the grounds of St. Andrew's Church on Red River Road.

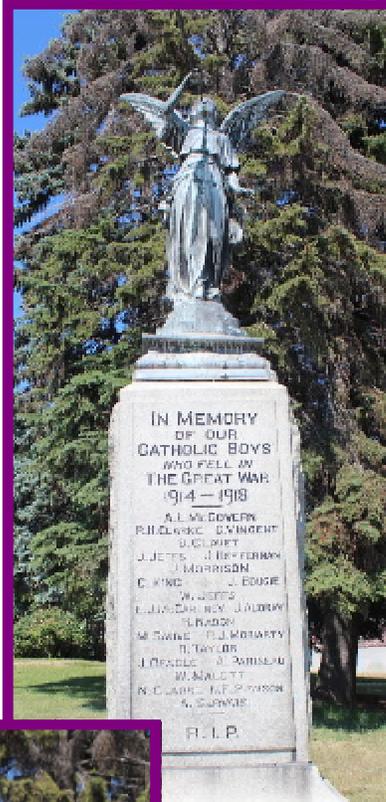
Unlike Many Others

War memorials around the world usually display stone crosses and engravings of poppies on them to honour the dead. However, this very unique local one draws its inspiration from the Gospel of Matthew, and from the Letters of St. Paul. In Matthew, Jesus says to his disciples: *"And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"*. (Mt. 24:31). Then, St. Paul echoes these same words in his First Letter to the

Corinthians: *"For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall all be changed"*. (1 Cor. 15:52).

Hope and New Life
When we read these Bible passages, we realize that our Cenotaph does not simply remind us of death like most of the others, but of the Christian hope of new life promised after death. The angel of God who is set atop of this stone plinth is a triumphant one, sounding the trumpet for all life to return to its Maker and calling home all whose names are inscribed on it .

Built in 1925 or Later?
I have found little historical data about our Monument's designer or year of construction. We do know however, that the so-called 'Port Arthur' Cenotaph in Waverley Park was constructed nearby in 1925, so, perhaps our's was also built around that same time.



The Fort William First Nation Cenotaph

The many Indigenous soldiers from our area who bravely served Canada in armed conflicts are remembered in this large Memorial, located atop Mt. Mackay on the Fort William First Nation. One of them was Mr. Frank Banning, who, with his wife, Evelyn were long time and active parishioners of our Cathedral. It was Frank who, in 1995, held the first Remembrance Day ceremony at this iconic Memorial, to remember these Indigenous veterans.

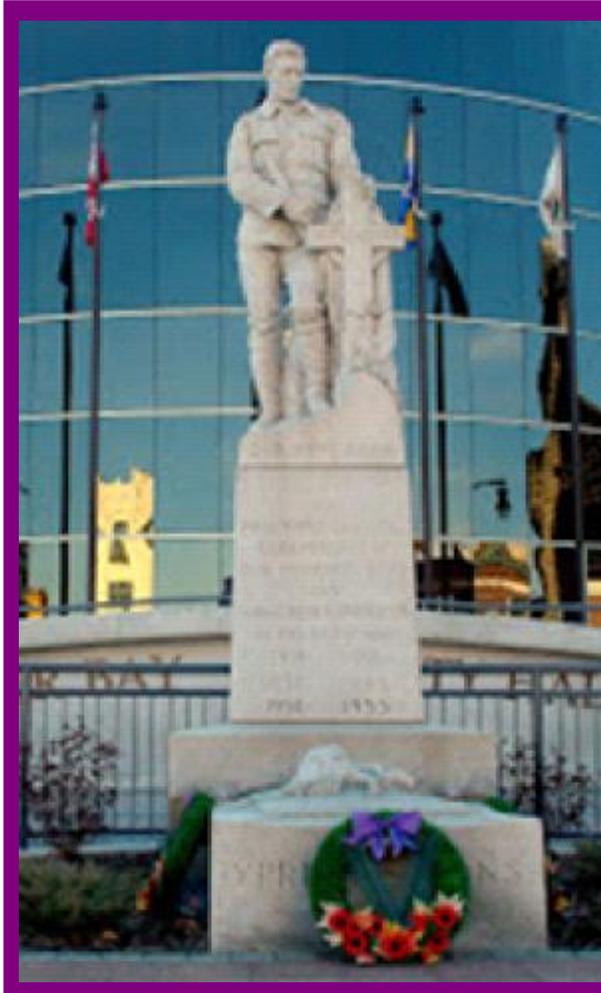
Since his death in 2010, others in Frank's family continued to observe the ceremony and now it has become a regular annual tradition. This imposing Cenotaph, was built near the historical Mt. Mckay Chapel, by the Ft. William First Nation in 1933. Its huge striking white cross, the symbol of the sacrifice of Christ, offered for the salvation and freedom of all, is a fitting symbol to remember all who likewise were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of others!



Our "City Hall" Cenotaph

The Cenotaph at Waverley Park

This beautifully artistic memorial was presented by the Fort William Women's Patriotic Society to the then City of Fort William in 1921 and now proudly stands in front of Thunder Bay's City Hall. It depicts a life-sized Canadian soldier, standing



alone, with his hand resting on a cross grave marker beside him. The words, "in Flanders" are on the cross. His head is respectfully bowed in prayer and in remembrance of his fellow soldiers who were lost in battle. Just below his feet is the replica of a coffin with a rifle, a helmet and two W.W.I battle field names, "Ypres" and "Mons", engraved on it.

This striking monument is located in the middle of Waverley Park in the City's North core. Made of solid white granite, this cenotaph resembles a tall grave stone marker which bears a large engraved cross at the top and two smaller black crosses on either side of the inscribed names of more of our citizens who served Canada in armed conflict and who gave their lives for Canada. It was erected in 1925 and,



in its stark simplicity, it not only honours the dead but reminds the living of the tragic consequences of war and reminds us to choose its alternative of peace.