

Frederic Baraga

Photo essay compiled by Russell Magnaghi and Ted Bays



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The Venerable Bishop Fredric Baraga (1797-1868): Statue at his Assinins Mission near Baraga, MI. The kneeling Native, Chief Assinins, holds Baraga's Ojibwa dictionary. The child represents Natives in Baraga's orphanage.

Photograph by: Tom Buchkoe



The remains of Bishop Baraga now lie in this red sandstone chapel on the west side of the Cathedral of St. Peter in Marquette, MI. The Snowshoe Priest is considered for canonization. In keeping with Baraga's possible sainthood, the new chapel includes stain glass windows by artisans from the Conrad Schmitt Co. of New Berlin, WI with iconography detailing Baraga's Missions and labors for Natives across the Lake Superior region. Although historically Upper Peninsula quarries provided red sandstone for regional buildings, the chapel stone came from a discard pile at a defunct Ontario quarry. It was worked into a perfect imitation of the larger cathedral architecture, in reduced scale, by architect Paul Uimari, project manager Rob Berg of Gunlach-Champion Co., and Gillett (WI) Concrete's Dave DeJulianne. The boulders were shipped to Wisconsin and rough cut to blocks, then fine-faced in Marquette. The Bishop Baraga Association and Dr. John and Mary Beaumier supported the project.

Photograph by: Ted Bays



The south window, behind Baraga's sarcophagus, has a border of the eight crests of the dioceses where Baraga served. The crest at the top of the arch shows his Coat of Arms. The larger top center medallion shows the Bishop baptizing Chief Edward Assinins, the first convert at Baraga's L'Anse mission in 1844. Baraga served at that mission 1843-1853. The center medallion depicts the Snowshoe Priest's mode of travel among his many Lake Superior missions. The lower medallion shows the ailing Baraga, helped by Honoratus Bourion, returning to Marquette in 1868.

The west window shows Bishop Baraga sailing to America and across the Great Lakes (top medallion) from his home in Slovenia (center medallion). The large image shows the Bishop blessing with his right hand, while in his left he holds the Ikkitowini Masigainan, his dictionary of the Ojibwa (Chippewa) language. He stands amid the natural splendor of the land he revered.
—Catholic Diocese of Marquette

Photograph by: Ted Bays

The west window, Venerable Bishop Baraga Chapel



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BISHOP BARAGA HOUSE

Frederick Baraga was a lawyer, an artist and a Roman Catholic priest who came to the U. S. from present-day Slovenia in 1830. Baraga (1797-1868) served Native Americans in the Great Lakes region and wrote A Dictionary of the Otchipwe Language (Chippewa or Ojibwa), published in 1853. Named vicar apostolic of the Sault that year, he became bishop of Sault Ste. Marie in 1857, and transferred the See to the diocese of Marquette in 1866. Baraga lived in a part of this house that was later moved from behind the cathedral ... to this site [615 S. 4th St., Marquette, MI]. He continued working with native people, helping them Baraga died in this house on January 19, 1868. --Michigan Historical Marker HB28



Bishop Baraga's first Upper Peninsula mission, reconstructed on its original site on the east shore of Indian Lake near Manistique, MI. Baraga arrived here in 1832, paddling from Cross Village with his native escorts and guides. He found the local natives already building a church; he baptized 31 of them that summer. They built a larger church in 1833. For many years the site included an Indian burial ground with the remains of chief Ossawinamakee, one of his sons, and others. Spirit houses of various sizes and shapes over each grave survived into the 20th Century. A totem stick identified each deceased. The chief's son Semo maintained the site before removing to Nahma, where he is buried. Baraga also ministered at Grand Rapids, MI and Madeline Island, WI before moving to Assinins in 1843, then to the Sault in 1853, and finally to Marquette in 1866. A bronze statue of Baraga in Grand Rapids was unveiled in 2012. The reconstruction here enlisted Ted Foye and the Manistique High School building trades class; Msgr. F. M. Scheringer; St. Teresa Parish of Germfask; businessmen Patsy McNamara and Jim Miller; and woodcarver Lionel Radofski.

--Vonciel LeDuc & Schoolcraft Co. Historical Museum, Diocese of Marquette

Photograph by: Schoolcraft County Historical Museum



Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Goulais Bay near the mouth of the Goulais River, in the Algoma District north of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, marks the site of another Bishop Baraga mission. Baraga tended missions across Ontario, from Bruce Mines to Thunder Bay. —**Ontario Historic Plaque**

Holy Redeemer Mission Church, pictured below, stands in Eagle Harbor, MI on the Keweenaw Peninsula. The original church, constructed in 1854 on land secured by Baraga in 1852, deteriorated with the decline of the copper mining boom in the late 19th century but underwent considerable restoration in the late 20th century when services resumed. This is the oldest of the remaining churches built by Bishop Baraga still in use in the Diocese of Marquette. It was listed as a Michigan Historic Site in 1958 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The famous Our Lady of the Pines Mission Church also survives, several miles to the north in Copper Harbor. -- **The Diocese of Marquette**

Photograph by: Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

HOLY REDEEMER MISSION CHURCH, EAGLE HARBOR, MI.



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