



*Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k*

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Community votes to relocate remains of Fr. Leon Lajoie

### For immediate release

**(Kahnawake – 28, Enniskó:wa/March 2022)** The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to inform Kahnawà'kehró:non that the Council of Chiefs have officially received and accepted the results of the community poll regarding the remains of Fr. Leon Lajoie.

The independent poll, which was carried out by PlanIt Consulting, resulted in 223 votes cast to remove his remains and 195 votes to leave his remains in their current resting place.

The poll was initiated following the engagement sessions with Kahnawà'kehró:non in November, 2021, which indicated that the community should determine the outcome of this matter.

The MCK has initiated discussions with the Jesuit Order to begin the process to obtain the proper legal authorizations to exhume the remains of Fr. Leon Lajoie. The community has provided clear direction and this will be the final decision in this matter.

“This has been a very difficult period for our people and we are aware that the results of this poll may have provided resolution for some whereas for others it has caused great pain,” said Ietsenhaienhsh Tonya Perron. “We only hope that the path moving forward paves the way for healing for everyone. We encourage anyone in need of mental and/or emotional support to reach out for it.”

As previously announced, the Jesuit Order and Diocese of St-Jean Longueuil have confirmed that they will respect the wishes of the community and lead all actions towards a resolution and absorb all related costs. The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke will be collaborating with them to ensure that the removal and relocation takes place in a timely, respectful and legal manner and will inform the community of next steps moving forward.

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