

Canada skips patron saint's day

by UPI

MONTREAL -- Diocesan officials said Canadians ignored the annual observation of Canada's patron St. Joseph Wednesday because Easter is so early this year. March 19 has been St. Joseph's day since 1479 and was adopted by New France -- later Canada -- in 1624, The Gazette (Montreal) reported. Traditionally, thousands flock to St. Joseph's Oratory up the mountain for the observance in west Montreal with its landmark illuminated white cross at the top, but the liturgical calendar was discarded this year, diocesan officials decided. Holy Week began for Roman Catholics last weekend with Palm Sunday. The following Wednesday calls for the solemn liturgy of when Christ was betrayed by Judas, which trumps observations of saints' days, the newspaper said. Also as a result of the early Easter, St. Patrick's Day wasn't celebrated by the church on March 17, either, the report said.

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