

St. Anns Church, Membertou to re-open— six-month experiment



Christians celebrate the coming of Christ at Christmas. This Christmas will mean something special to the Micmac people living at Membertou in Sydney because Midnight Mass in St. Anne's Church, Membertou on this Christmas Eve will mean the coming of Christ to them in a special way. It will mark the beginning of regular weekly Mass in their church which has been completely renovated recently. A regular weekly program will be carried out on an experimental basis for a period of six months when it will be reviewed and evaluated to determine whether it has been spiritually beneficial for the people and the extra effort justified.

The Church on the reserve is intended primarily for the people at Membertou and not for non-Indians. Funerals, weddings and baptisms will continue to be held only in St. Anthony Daniel Church, the mother church. The Blessed Sacrament will be reserved in St. Anne's Church for the devotion of the parishioners.

All the plans for the reopening of St. Anne's Church have been worked out through dialogue between the people at Membertou and officials of St. Anthony Daniel Parish. The formal document requesting the reopening of the church was signed by Grand Chief Donald Marshall, Rev. A.J. MacLeod, Pastor Mr. Paul Terry, Parish Council Chairman, Mr. Charles Herney, Captain, Membertou Chief John Ginnish, Rev. Hugh MacNeil and Sister Anne Gillis, Parish Team, and Mr. Gus Christmas, Member of the Grand

Council.

The request was presented to Bishop William E. Power and the opening words of the document read: "We wish to express our respect and gratitude to you for your continuing encouragement and support for the spiritual welfare of the Micmac people." If, after the experimental period of six months, the continuation of the program is judged wise, it is hoped to have the official opening of the church on July 26, 1973, the Feast of St. Anne, at which Bishop Power would officiate.

Many expenses are necessary to obtain the things necessary for the reopening of the church and anyone wishing to help is asked to forward donations to Mr. Gus Christmas, 11 Maillard St., Sydney (562-5160).

The people at Membertou held a meeting at St. Anne's Church at 7:30 p.m., Thursday evening December 14, to make further arrangements for the reopening of the church.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SERVICES

St. Ann's Church

Membertou

December 24, 1972:

Confessions... 7 to 9 p.m.

Christmas Carols 11:45 p.m.

Midnight Mass 12:00

Celebrant: Rev. A.J. MacLeod p.p.
St. Anthony Daniel