

For immediate release

## MONASTERY FOUNDED BY THE AUGUSTINIAN HOSPITAL SISTERS IN 1639 ENTRUSTED TO THE PUBLIC

**Quebec (Quebec) February 14, 2013** – Earlier today, at the monastery of *l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec*, *La Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines* and the communities of Augustinian Hospital Sisters of Quebec publically celebrated the recent handing on of the order's founding monastery to the cultural trust that now maintains ownership of the property for the public. The Augustinian sisters recently signed the deed of transfer of the Hôtel-Dieu monastery (established in 1639) to the *Fiducie* that will carry out plans for a project called ***Le Monastère des Augustines***. The Honourable Pauline Marois, Premier of Quebec; the Honourable Maka Kotto, Minister of Culture and Communications; the Honourable Agnès Maltais, Minister of Labour, Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity, Minister responsible for the Status of Women, and Minister responsible for the National Capital and Chaudières-Appalaches regions; the Honourable Steven Blaney M.P. for Lévis-Bellechasse and Minister of Veterans Affairs; and Mr. Régis Labeaume, Mayor of the city of Quebec were among those present to witness this visionary gesture of important historical significance.

This unprecedented project grew out of the sisters' desire to have the collections and archives of their twelve monastery-hospitals gathered together on one site and to make this heritage accessible to the public. In so doing, the Augustinian sisters - who in fact laid the foundations of Quebec's hospital system - ensure that their place in history and their role in the development of the country will be remembered for generations to come.

"We are convinced that the lessons of the past have a lot to offer women and men of today, both the young and the not-so-young. Those who discover this heritage, who become familiar with it and study it, will be able to find a meaning in it for themselves. The monastery will be a place of re-centering for those who come for a short visit or a longer stay. It will be a place to find meaning, comfort, well-being and respite in the heart of the city and the effervescence of our lives", said Sister Hélène Marquis, Superior of *la Fédération des Augustines*.

*La Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines*, a trust created by the Augustinian sisters on October 1, 2009, has assumed responsibility for the religious community's cultural heritage in order to ensure the continuation of the community's values and to give the general public access to their treasures.

"We accept this responsibility because it is imbued with all that you are: your depth of soul, your charisma, in a word, the light that you transmit. We join with you in offering

your heritage to the public, in protecting it and sharing it, in order to fulfill your will that inspires us all. The trust that you created, and of which I have the honour of being chairperson, will be the devoted guardian of your heritage”, said Mr. Bernard Cliche, chair of the Board, speaking to the Augustinian sisters.

Those present at today’s event had the opportunity to meet representatives of the *Fiducie*, as well as several Augustinian sisters from the various monasteries of the province of Quebec. Political dignitaries witnessed this historic moment, and took the opportunity to reiterate their commitment to and financial support for **Le Monastère des Augustines**. The Government of Canada has offered up to 15 million dollars for, among other things, the completion of the museum portion of the project. This contribution comes from the Major Project Component of the Building Canada Fund which is aimed at large scale strategic projects of national and regional significance. For its part, the Government of Quebec also contributed 15 million dollars for the completion of this innovative complex from the capital assistance programme of the Ministry of Culture and Communications. The city of Quebec committed to contributing 6 million dollars.

Scheduled to open in mid-2015, **Le Monastère des Augustines**, situated in the heart of Old Quebec, will offer visitors from around the world contemporary programming that focuses on wellness and unique ways of discovering this National Historic Site through *L’Hôtellerie*, *Le Musée* and *Les Archives*. Further details about the unique nature of the project as well as the future activities of **Le Monastère des Augustines** will be made public in the coming months. The project also includes the *Centre Catherine-de-Saint-Augustin* which the Augustinian Sisters will continue to oversee.

*The mission of **La Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines** is to preserve and share the heritage (property, furnishings - including medical, ethnological and religious objects - as well as archives and old books) and memory of the Augustinian Sisters of Quebec for the benefit of the entire population and for generations to come. La Fiducie is currently overseeing the transformation of the monastery of l’Hôtel-Dieu de Québec in order to bring to fruition two priority projects on the site: **Le Monastère des Augustines** and le Centre Catherine-de-Saint-Augustin (which the sisters will continue to oversee).*

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**SOURCE : *La Fiducie du patrimoine culturel des Augustines***

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