

Care for Our Common Home: Providence Collaborates with Root for Trees



On October 1, 2022, a group of around 30 volunteers gathered by the West End part of Edmonton City at 9:30 AM MDT (Mountain Daylight Time). A variety of people were there including families, couples, religious Sisters, Providence Associates, and friends. Guided by two Root for Trees Program Leaders, the group was able to plant 387 seedlings in the area!

The event was spearheaded by the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) coordinator of the Sisters of Providence (Holy Angels Province) in Western Canada. They gathered the volunteers and organized the event in collaboration with the City of Edmonton. Meanwhile, two *Root for Trees* Program Leaders were also there to lead the

group of volunteers and to provide the materials.

There were shovels, gloves, and 7 types of seedlings including white spruces, lodgepole pines, and saskatoon berries. The leaders and volunteers were planting for 2 hours, and by the end of the event, 387 seedlings were planted! In a few years, they will eventually grow into beautiful trees and shrubs.

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is NOW."

-Chinese Proverb

What is "Root for Trees"?

Root for Trees is an Edmonton-based initiative that seeks to plant 45,000 trees & shrubs each year and 2,000,000 trees & shrubs by 2050. Their

initiative has already planted 266,610 trees & shrubs since 2013!

Root for Trees hosts three kinds of opportunities for people who are willing to volunteer...



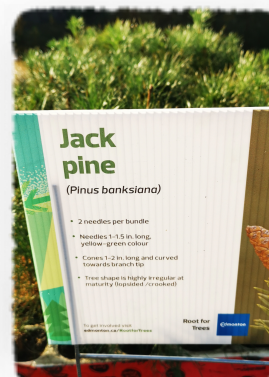
Guided Tree Planting. A program led by Program Leaders who give the volunteers information, demonstration, and safety talk. They also provide shovels, gloves, and plants that get to the ground. The group of 10-30 volunteers choose a 2-hour time period to plant their seedlings: 10AM-12PM (morning), 1PM-3PM (afternoon), and 6PM-8PM (evening).



Self-Guided. A program for self-led small groups of around 2-9 people. *Root for Trees* provides the materials and information to the group. There are no Program Leaders at the event, but the volunteer leader must be properly trained in order for their group to be given the green light for planting.



Root for Trees Events. Special events held by the City of Edmonton throughout the year including events for *Family Nature Night*, *Food Forest*, and *National Tree Day*.



More information can be found on their website:
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/root-for-trees

Overall, the tree planting event was a success. Every seedling planted contributes towards *Root for Trees* ' goal of 2 million trees and shrubs by 2050. This event has a positive impact on our environment. Earth's nature needs to be restored to how it once was before massive changes destroy our world. Together, you, me, and everyone else on Earth can help bring green back — one seedling at a time.

-Article written by Izaac Samalio

Here's what our volunteers have to say...

"It was highly enjoyable! As a former tree planter, it felt lovely to be putting trees into the earth again. And this time, ones that won't be harvested in 60-100 years. Working together with a group of like-minded people who care about giving back to this lovely planet we call our temporary home. I also enjoyed the fact that the proverb on our t-shirt was very personal to me in the fact that my first year tree planting in BC was in 2002 (20 years ago — "the best time to plant a tree") and that I was given the opportunity to do it again, NOW — "the second best time."

- Rebecca Fenrich, Providence Renewal Centre (PRC) Staff

"This was a wonderful opportunity to connect — with the earth and with colleagues, friends, and family. It was really an experience of working together for the betterment of the whole. The sensitivity and genuineness of the Root for Trees team added depth to the collegial experience. Feeling the earth, taking care to plant the trees, sharing in learning and laughing...truly, we are all connected in and through all!"

- Carol Sebastian, PRC Staff



"The tree planting experience was a positive experience for me. The weather was good. The two young facilitators were enthusiastic and gave excellent hints about planting. I loved the opening prayer. What was significant for me was that I felt deeply connected to the Earth. I felt I was on holy ground, to be gentle with the plants and to help them grow. It was like meditation. I enjoyed the bantering forth of comments during the tree planting. I felt we were all in this together. It was a grace-filled event."

- Sr. Toyleen Fook, SP

"I really enjoyed the tree planting experience. It was lovely talking to friends I hadn't seen for a while and I enjoyed making new friends. In the beginning, I dedicated each tree to those near and dear and then to friends far and the whole world or something like that. Then I got a bit tired and lost track of who or what I wanted to plant for. My legs weren't used to that kind of labour with the shovel and all, I guess. But then when we were done it was the most lovely sight to see, all those 387 little plants from up above. Quite a wholesome feeling. Thank you. I will remember this day dearly!"

- Vera Gutierrez, PA



"I had fun at the tree planting event. I am especially happy to know that the trees I planted will be there 100 years from now. I want to go visit the site sometime. I was in competition with my friends and brother, and we were rushing to plant as many as we can. But it was so hard. In the end, we all decided to plant based on our ages. It was also funny how they tricked us saying they have \$100 buried somewhere. That wasn't true."

- ZB (12 years old), child of PRC Staff

"My friends and I decided to plant based on our ages, so I was happy to accomplish that goal. One day, when I'm older and start to drive, I hope to see the trees we planted tall and healthy. It was especially memorable for me when I remember my younger sister asking where they buried the money."

- Johann (14 years old), child of PRC Staff



"I am so grateful to have organized this event in collaboration with the City of Edmonton. I truly felt the sense of collaboration and commitment from each volunteer and I am very touched. This is a good way of answering the cry of Mother Earth, our Common Home. I look forward to another tree planting event in 2023."

- Sr. Mae Valdez, SP (JPIC Coordinator)



Held within Treaty 6 territory and the home of Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4, this is a tree planting event of the Sisters of Providence of Holy Angels Province in Western Canada, in partnership with the City of Edmonton through Root for Trees initiative. This is the community's way of contributing towards the care of Creation and healing of the land.