



# Tom Rakocevic

MPP / Député, Humber River—Black Creek

## Queen's Park

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## Community Office

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August 22, 2023

Hon. Michael D. Ford  
Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism  
56 Wellesley St, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2E7  
VIA Email [Michael.Ford@pc.ola.org](mailto:Michael.Ford@pc.ola.org)

Hon. Neil Lumsden  
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
438 University Ave., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 1N3  
VIA Email [Neil.Lumsden@pc.ola.org](mailto:Neil.Lumsden@pc.ola.org)

Dear Minister Ford & Minister Lumsden,

I am writing to you with regards to the Marian Shrine of Gratitude located at 3100 Weston Road where people have been gathering for many years to pray and seek a connection with their spirituality.

As of Wednesday, August 16, 2023, worshippers were removed from the property and further public access to the shrine has been restricted. As of Sunday, August 22, 2023, various articles of faith have been removed from the site and many fear that further alterations to the site may be imminent.

The Marian Shrine of Gratitude has been a destination for countless individuals and families as a place of prayer and spiritual growth for many years. Over 15,000 individuals have signed a petition seeking to have this shrine preserved and accessible to members of the public (<https://www.change.org/p/help-save-the-marian-shrine-of-gratitude>).

This shrine is also part of a property that is on the City of Toronto's Heritage List. I have received a letter from Paul Cordingley, Chair of the Etobicoke York Preservation Panel, who supports the designation of the property under the Ontario Heritage Act, also stating that "the proper course of action should be a cessation of alterations and removal of items at the site" until a decision has been rendered. I have attached this letter.

Is your Ministry aware of this urgent situation and is the Ministry contemplating a study to determine this site to be of provincial significance and thereby protected by the Ontario Heritage Act?



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This matter is of great importance to members of my community and far beyond, and I await your response as time is of the utmost importance here. As stated, alterations to this site have been underway and more may be imminent, affecting the cultural and heritage significance of the site before a decision is made.

Sincerely,

Tom Rakocevic  
Member of Provincial Parliament  
Humber River-Black Creek

CC:

MPP Jill Andrew  
Toronto – St. Paul's  
Culture & Heritage Critic  
Queen's Park, Room 115  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5  
VIA Email [JAndrew-QP@ndp.on.ca](mailto:JAndrew-QP@ndp.on.ca)

Michelle Gittens  
Assistant Deputy Minister (Acting)  
Citizenship, Inclusion and Heritage Division  
1075 Bay St. 7th Flr.  
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