

Lake Superior, called Gitchi-gami (Big Waters) by the Anishinaabeg (Ojibwa or Chippewa), is the largest fresh water lake in surface area, on the planet. It contains 10% of the world's fresh water. (1) Madeline Island is located in the Chequamegon Bay, South Western Lake Superior. Madeline Island Is the largest island in the Apostle Island National Lake Shore.

Global Great Lakes

(GPS 46°81'35" N 90°69'13" W)

August, 1659, two adventurers and fur traders, Pierre Esprit Radisson and Medard Chouart de Groseilliers became the first non-native persons on Madeline Island. Spring 1660 they returned to Montreal, French Territories. Father Claude Allouez heard about their journeys and requested permission to take the "Holy Word" to the natives on the "Upper Lake" (the lake above Lake Huron).

October 1st., 1665, traveling one hundred leagues (540 miles) along the shores of Lake Superior then called Lac Tracy, (Governor of the Virginia Territory). Father Claude Allouez entered Chequamegon Bay. There he discovered 7 different nations of indigenous people. He found Chippewas, Pottawattómies, Kikapoos, Sauks, and Fox. There was also Hurons, Ottawas, Miamis, and Illinois, who were were fleeing the westward movement of invading Europeans. Fr.

Allouez also noted that there were “800 men bearing arms.” He constructed a chapel on the bay either at Thompson’s Creek or the Sioux River south of today’s Washburn, WI. He then founded a second chapel at La Pointe du St. Esprit on Madeline Island. Fr. Allouez suffered the winter, “at first, we could find shelter only under a bark roof where we were so frequently visited by these people, most of whom had never seen any Europeans, that we were overwhelmed.” He was later joined by Father Jacques Marquette.

Spring, 1669, Fr. Allouez left La Pointe Mission in the care of Fr. Marquette. An Indian war between the between the Anishinaabeg and the Sioux people became more widespread. Fr. Marquette was driven away in the summer of 1671. He went on to join Father Louis Joliet and became famous for their exploration of the lower Michigan and the Mississippi Basin. The war lasted for more than 160 years.

1835 The mission of St. Joseph Catholic Community was established by Father Frederic Baraga. A small cabin was constructed.

(GPS 46°46’20” N. 90°46’54”W)

1841 A larger St. Joseph Catholic Church was constructed on a different location. The church was destroyed by fire in 1901 and rebuilt on the same site in 1902. Today’s Church is located at the intersection

of 266 Airport Road, LaPointe, WI. (GPS 46°46'21" N
90°46'57")

***NOTE: for more complete detail on Father Frederic
Baraga paper written by Robert Goslin for Fr. Rajesh
or Bishop Baraga Association***