



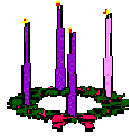
ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
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Pastor's
Corner

December 14, 2008— 3rd Sunday of Advent

TRUE SELF, TRUE JOY

Dear Parishioners,



One sign that you are well on your way to find joy is when people start asking you, "What is driving you to serve with so much love and resiliency? Where do you get that rare combination of zeal and patience? What is your secret? The people kept asking these questions to John the Baptist. The Gospel summarizes them in two questions "Who are you?" and "What is your mission?". The people thought John was the Messiah or the Prophet. But he kept refusing these false identities. He knew what he was not. He knew himself through his relationship with God. "I am not the Bridegroom. I am the friend of the Bridegroom and I hear what He is saying to His Bride and this makes my joy complete." That was John's secret for his joyful purpose-driven life.

The secret of Mother Teresa was pretty much the same. She knew that God was **the one** who was madly in love with her. She knew that His love for her was infinitely greater than her love for Him. She knew God was begging and pleading for her love. This is remarkably different from what we are used to reading in the pious literature about the saints: they are begging for God's mercy and help. God doesn't seem to beg for their love and help. But it is Mother Teresa who is right, not that pious literature. Did not St. Paul say, "We did not love God first. God loved us first. Even while we were unrepentant sinners, He gave his Life for us."

The secret of true joy lies in finding your true identity and mission. These are found in realizing that God has always been madly in love with you. You may not feel it but you can know it through faith. This knowledge or awareness will drive you to your ultimate purpose or mission: to let God shine through you and so be in you that every soul you come in contact with may feel God's presence in you. Even when you don't feel God's presence and love in you, you know He is there through your love for others, and through your desire to be used by Him for their salvation.

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Pastor's Corner (cont'd)

What a joy to be so close to Him so as to reveal His love for everyone you meet. You are called to become "God-in-service". **So aware of your nothingness yet so aware of His Infinite Intimacy. That joy cannot be taken away from you.** That mission gives meaning to every other mission and identity that you received from society and through heredity.

God Bless You. *Fr. Pierre*

*"God enters by a private door into every individual".
 Ralph Waldo Emerson*

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

- Sun. Dec. 14:** 2:00pm Couples for Christ (Church Basement)
 2:30pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
 3:00pm RCIA (Church)
 3:30pm RCIA (continues in Rectory Basement)
 5:00pm Youth & Young Adults Mass (Church)
- Mon Dec. 15:** 6:00pm Bingo (School Gym)
 7:00pm Christian Meditation (Rectory Basement)
 7:30pm Marian Prayer Group (Rectory Library)
 7:30pm Simbang Gabi Mass (Church)
- Tue. Dec. 16:** 6:30pm PREP & Teen PREP (School)
 6:45pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining Room)
- Wed. Dec. 17:** 6:30pm RCIA (Church Basement)
 6:30pm PREP & Teen PREP (School)
 7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
 7:40pm Healing Prayer (Crying Room/Sacristy)
 9:15pm Benediction (Church)
- Thu. Dec. 18:** 7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
 7:30pm Charismatic Prayer (Church Basement)
 7:40pm Healing Prayer (Crying Room/Sacristy)
 9:15pm Benediction (Church)
- Fri. Dec. 19:** 9:00am Bible Sharing for Moms (Rectory Basmt.)
 3:00pm & 6:15pm Divine Mercy (Church)
 7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
 7:40pm **Penitential Service** (Church)
 7:40pm Healing Prayer
 9:30pm Benediction (Church)
- Sat. Dec. 20:** 12:30pm Bible Sharing (Church Basement)
 3:30pm Legion of Mary (Church Basement)
 6:00pm Handmaids Xmas Party (Church Bsmt)
- Sun. Dec. 21:** 2:00pm St. Michael's Liturgy (7451 Sussex Avenue)
 2:30pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
 5:00pm Youth & Young Adults Mass (Church)



PARISH NEWS

2009 SUNDAY ENVELOPES READY FOR PICK-UP

2009 envelope boxes have been available in the church basement for over two weeks. However, over 1000 remain unclaimed. Please pick yours up ASAP -- any boxes that are not picked up by the end of January will be reassigned to new parishioners. **PLEASE** inform us of any name or address changes to be made to your label. Also inform us if you have looked for your envelope and cannot find it. **Two separate sheets are provided beside the envelopes so that you can provide these pieces of information. Thank you for your assistance.**

THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

The annual giving tree has been set up in the church foyer. If you took a gift tag from the tree, it indicates your commitment to purchase a gift for a child aged newborn to 16 years old. This weekend was the deadline, but if you forgot to bring your unwrapped gift today, note that the absolute last date is Thursday Dec 18, at which time we will forward these donations to an organization(s) that will distribute them to children who would otherwise be without gifts at Christmas. **Thank you for helping these loved ones.** Your generosity will make this another enjoyable Christmas for many.



PENITENTIAL SERVICE AT ST. MARY'S

On **Friday December 19, after the 7:00pm Mass**, we will be having a penitential service. Several priests will be available to hear confessions. Please take the opportunity to prepare yourselves instead of waiting for the very last moment before Christmas. God Bless!!



CHRISTMAS FOOD GIFTS FOR PASTORS

Every Christmas, we receive way more cooked meals and desserts than we can use and we don't have time to bring them to the needy. So, we have to throw it away! We have a very good cook at home who prepares healthy, no fat- no salt - no sweet meals. Please help some of us Dominicans follow our diets! The gift we appreciate most is your prayers and your words of encouragement. If you give money, know that we will forward it to Luke 15, a Christian based recovery house for men. Later in January, we will tell you how much you have given them through us. Most of all, we don't expect any gift because you are God's gift to us. God Bless you.

The Pastors — Fr. Pierre and Fr. Mark

I LOVED JESUS IN THE NIGHT -- TERESA OF CALCUTA

If you attended Fr. Paul Murray's talk in October, and signed up for his new book "I loved Jesus in the Night - Teresa of Calcutta - a secret revealed", please drop by the registration table with your payment of \$15 and pick up your copy.

PARISH NEWS / COMMUNITY

YOUTH MINISTRY SURVEY

This survey is for the youth, ages 11 - 18. We want to hear from you. Please complete the survey found in the pews today. Tell us what you think about the Youth Ministry. This will help us make Youth Ministry a better experience for you.

KEEP THE HOMELESS WARM

St. Mary's St. Vincent de Paul Society will be collecting donations of **NEW** socks, gloves, scarves and toques during the month of December as part of our outreach program for the homeless. They will be distributed during this Christmas season when we make our weekly visit to the corner of Hastings and Main with our sandwich truck.. Please drop your donations into the box in the foyer marked **"Socks, Gloves, Scarves and Toques"**. **PLEASE note: we are NOT collecting any other clothing at this time.** Thank you in advance on behalf of the poor. With your generosity, we will have another great year.



NEW YEAR'S EVE

Come join fellow parishioners and celebrate during our **New Year's Eve Family Potluck Dinner on December 31 in the school gym.** The cost is \$15 per family (will be refunded when attending). For reservations call: Lita 604-451-5720, Becky 604-437-4965 or Beth 604-431-9945.



CATHOLIC HISTORY

In honour of the 100 years celebration of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese, St. Mary's Young Adult Leadership team invites parishioners of all ages to attend a series on Catholic History. Topics include -- **Jan 5:** Faith and its effects on social change in the 20th century, **Jan 12:** the work of the Sisters, who taught the Japanese evacuees in the Interior during the war, **Jan 19:** The History of the Catholic Church in the Lower Mainland, **Jan 26:** Stories of Restoring historical monuments such as Holy Cross Church, "The Skookumchuck Church" Skatin, BC These talks will be in **St. Mary's church basement from 7:00 - 9:00pm.** Early bird registration: one time fee of \$5. Cost at door: \$10. Sign up or forward inquiries: smyac_team@yahoo.ca.

HOLY LAND CARVINGS

Olive wood carvings and ornaments from Bethlehem and Jerusalem will be available for sale in the church foyer after all masses this weekend, **December 13 and 14.** The proceeds from this sale help Christian families of the Holy Land

DIOCESAN/ COMMUNITY NEWS

PRO-LIFE MASS & VIGIL

A peaceful and prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents on **Saturday, January 3, 2009. Mass is at 9:00am at St. Ignatius Parish,** 5935 Iona Drive, Vancouver, followed by the Vigil in the Church. Contact Michelle at Respect Life Office for more info: 604-443-3256

ADVENT NOVENA SPONSERED BY SAMBAYANANG PILIPINO

St. Mary's Parish will be hosting the first night of the Advent Novena on **December 15 at 7:30pm.** This novena, called SIMBANG GABI is the traditional Novena Mass in the Philippines in preparation for the birth of our Lord on Christmas. The novena continues **Dec 16** at St. Jude Parish, **Dec 17** at Our Lady of Fatima in Coquitlam, **Dec 18** at Our Lady of Mercy (10th & Kingsway) in Burnaby, **Dec 19** at St. Luke's Parish in Maple Ridge, **Dec 20** at St. Ann's Parish in Abbotsford, **Dec 21** at Holy Trinity in North Vancouver, **Dec 22** at Sacred Heart in Delta and **Dec 23** at Immaculate Conception in Delta. All are welcome -- Fellowship Follows

MISA DE GALLO (pre-Christmas novena)

Everyone is invited to a special novena of evening masses to be celebrated at **St. Patrick's Parish (2881 Main St & 13th Ave)** from **December 15 to December 23.** Festive music, Filipino food and guest preachers will make this novena a memorable event and an ideal spiritual preparation for Christmas. Masses will be celebrated at 7:00pm Monday to Friday, 4:30pm on Saturday and 5:00pm on Sunday.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver is seeking a Communications Officer who will be responsible for coordinating internal and external communications for the Archdiocese of Vancouver. The Office of Communications facilitates interview requests, fields media inquiries and brings pertinent news stories to the press. Full details may be found at www.rcav.org.

INTENSIVE JOURNAL WORKSHOP

Begin the year with a Progoff INTENSIVE JOURNAL WORKSHOP—a program of self-development. The first phase, "LIFE CONTEXT" (Part 1, gaining a perspective on life) will be presented on **January 16 & 17, 2009 at St. Augustine's Parish,** by Fr. Bernie McCosham, OMI, an authorized consultant for this National Program. Pre-registration is required because of necessary hand-outs To register, send name and address to B.McCosham at 1311 The Crescent, Vancouver, BC V6H 1T7 with \$50 deposit. Total cost is \$130 which includes lunch and supper on Saturday January 17. More information at Intensive Journal: www.intensivejournal.org.

PARISH INFORMATION

MASSES

Monday & Tuesday: 8:00am
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00am and 7:00pm**
** followed by Adoration at 7:45pm & Benediction at 9:15pm
Saturday: 12:00noon; 5:00pm (**Anticipation**)
Sunday: 8:00am, 9:30am, 11:15am, 1:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm

CONFESSIONS

Sunday: Before all Masses (except 8:00am & 5:00pm) & After all Masses
Saturday: 11:15am to 11:55am, 4:15pm to 4:55pm, 6:10pm to 6:40pm
Weekdays: After ALL Masses (except Thursday Evening Masses)
--- An appointment for confession may be made by phone

HOLY COMMUNION Available to shut-ins. Contact Parish Office.

FIRST FRIDAYS: Adoration Throughout the day after Masses

Masses: 8:00am followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
7:00pm followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Benediction: 9:15pm

BAPTISMS: To register your child, contact the Parish Office.

MARRIAGES: One of the couple must be a registered Catholic parishioner of St. Mary's. Contact the Parish Office at least six months prior to your wedding date and prior to registering for the required diocesan Marriage Preparation Course.

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

Thursdays: 8:00am Saturdays: 12:00noon

RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. Contact the Parish Office.

PREP: Catechism Program for children attending public schools

TEEN PREP: Interactive Catechism Sessions for Teens

Coordinator: Eli Bautista Tuesday and Wednesday 6:30 to 8:00pm

E-mail: stmarys.prep@yahoo.ca

ST. MARY'S YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY (SMYAC)

Leader: Joseph D'silva

Email: smyac_team@yahoo.ca Website: www.smyac.ca

YOUTH MINISTRY (YM)

Coordinator: Arda Akoglu E-mail: stmarys_ym@yahoo.com

Website: www.saintmarysyouth.com

ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. Kevin Smith (Principal) Website: www.stmary.bc.ca

Office Phone: (604) 437-1312 Office Fax: (604) 437-1193

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Mondays to Fridays: 9:00am to 5:00pm
Saturdays: 11:00am to 2:00pm

Pastor:

Assistant Pastor: Fr. Pierre Leblond, O.P.

Youth Ministry/Volunteer Coordinator: Arda Akoglu

Parish Secretary: Margherita Bordignon