



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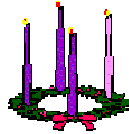
Pastor's
 Corner

December 21, 2008– 4th Sunday of Advent

“Silence Awaiting Birth”

Dear Parishioners,

As we come to the last Sunday before Christmas, we know that this time of waiting that is “pregnant” with expectation will soon come to birth. That all this waiting will not be in vain for it will at last spring forth its fruit in the birth of our Lord anew, and hopefully, in ever deeper and more profound ways in our lives.



Yet, waiting for great things to happen requires silence first. Yes, silence in expectation... a pregnant silence, yet silence first, if the Word is to spring forth with the fullness of life and grace.

That is why, Christmas **at** Advent just will not do. Christmas at Advent that already calls forth hustle and bustle and making merry does not allow for silence to impregnate our being so that the Word, so full of life and grace, may come forth... Instead, in exchange for this *Gift* that is *the Word*, we will have but bestowed upon ourselves a dullness and flatness of being...

Phillip Roderick drives this point home when he writes,

“On the other hand, silence also leads to words. If you are practising silence, it can be the physical silence of not speaking, but also an inner silence. If you practise silence a lot, your word becomes pregnant, becomes full.

When people talk to you, sometimes it doesn't come from silence; it's rattling, it's noisy. Some people can say very few things, sometimes very simple things, and yet it's enough to make you understand things...

Silence is a place that can give our words symbolic power. Most words are just words, more and more and more words. Silence is a place where words stop. More theologically, God is silence. Out of the silence God speaks the Word and the Word becomes flesh... That's the whole mystery of the Trinity, the relationship between silence and words.”

During these last few days of Advent, let us then nurture silence, that in the silence, the Word may spring forth into our lives, full of life and grace.

God bless, Fr. Mark.

THIS WEEK (& NEXT) IN OUR PARISH

- Sun. Dec. 21:** 2:00pm St. Michael's Liturgy (7451 Sussex Ave)
 2:30pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
 5:00pm Youth & Young Adults Mass (Church)
- Mon Dec. 22:** 6:00pm Bingo (School Gym)
 7:00pm Christian Meditation (Rectory Basement)
 7:30pm Marian Prayer Group (Rectory Library)
- Tue. Dec. 23:** 6:45pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining Room)
- Wed. Dec. 24:** 8:00am Weekday Mass (Church)
 5:00pm **Anticipated Christmas Mass** (Church)
 7:00pm **Anticipated Christmas Mass** (Church)
 9:30pm **Anticipated Christmas Mass** (Church)
 12:00am **Christmas Mass** (Church)
- Thu. Dec. 25:** 9:30am **Christmas Mass** (Church)
 11:15am **Christmas Mass** (Church)
 1:00pm **Christmas Mass** (Church)
 until 4:30pm Church remains open for anyone wanting a blessing from Fr. Pierre
- Fri. Dec. 26:** **10:00am Weekday Mass (not 8:00am)**
 3:00pm & 6:15pm Divine Mercy (Church)
 7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
 9:15pm Benediction (Church)
-  **Sat. Dec. 27:** 12:30pm Bible Sharing (Church Basement)
 3:00pm K of C Council (Church Basement)
 3:30pm Legion of Mary (Rectory Dining)
- Sun. Dec. 28:** 10:15am Willingdon Park Liturgy (4435 Grange St)
 2:30pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
 3:00pm Baptisms (Church)
 5:00pm Youth & Young Adults Mass (Church)
- Mon. Dec. 29:** 6:00pm Bingo (Gym)
 7:00pm Christian Meditation (Rectory Basement)
 7:30pm Marian Prayer Group (Rectory Library)
- Tue. Dec. 30:** 6:45pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
- Wed. Dec 31** 8:00am Weekday Mass (Church)
 5:00pm **Anticipated New Year Mass** (Church)
 10:00pm **Adoration until 11:15pm** (Church)
 11:30pm **Anticipated New Year Mass** (Church)
- Thu. Jan. 1** 9:30am **New Year Mass** (Church)
 11:15am **New Year Mass** (Church)
 1:00pm **New Year Mass** (Church)
- Fri. Jan 2: FIRST FRIDAY**
 8:00am Mass followed by Adoration all day (church)
 3:00pm & 6:15pm Divine Mercy (Church)
 7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
 9:15pm Benediction (Church)
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PARISH NEWS

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Since I don't have enough time to write my personal Christmas wishes for you before the bulletin deadline, I am sharing this message from Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche and son of former Governor General George Vanier.:

*“We all have to choose between two ways of being crazy: the foolishness of the Gospel and the non-sense of the values of our world. The Gospel is crazy: it sees in the weak and the poor a sign and a sacrament of God, thus revealing the mystery of Jesus and leading us to a true inner freedom, through a community life with celebrations and relationships. The values of the world are mad: they lead us to seek comfort and riches for ourselves, to reject others, to build protective walls around ourselves, and finally to arm ourselves for better defense. This leads finally to destruction. John Halsey, an Anglican priest of the Community of the Transfiguration in Scotland, once told a group from L'Arche: ‘Either we will continue to **walk on** the poor and that will lead to the explosion of nuclear arms; or we will **walk with** the poor and that will lead to the transfiguration in Jesus Christ.’”*

Jean Vanier - Man and Woman God Made Them

Quoted in “Word Made Flesh, Daily Reflections for Advent 2008 — Novalis **Merry Christmas Fr. Pierre**

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS BLESSING

On Christmas Day, the church will remain open until 4:30pm. I will be in the church to bless any individuals or families who would like to receive this blessing. *Fr. Pierre*

2009 SUNDAY ENVELOPES READY FOR PICK-UP

Many 2009 Sunday envelopes still remain unclaimed in the church basement. Any boxes not picked up by the end of January will be reassigned to new parishioners. **PLEASE** inform us of any changes to be made to your label, or if you have looked for your envelope and cannot find it. **Sheets are provided beside the envelopes to give this information.** For the month of January, insure you put your name/ address on the envelope.

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.

PARISH NEWS / COMMUNITY

SLEEPING BAGS FOR THE HOMELESS

In response to the recent extremely cold weather, St. Mary's Street Ministry has started an emergency project called "Sleeping Bags for the Homeless". Today's second collection enables you to help. Inserted in today's bulletin are small brown envelopes that say "Mission Appeal for Lebanon". (ignore that message - we are recycling envelopes). For tax purposes provide your name and address as well as **2008 envelope number**. Thank you in advance for your compassion. Merry Christmas!

MOTHER TERESA BOOK FOR SALE

Fr. Paul Murray's book entitled "I love Jesus in the Night: Teresa of Calcutta - a Secret Revealed" will be on sale in the foyer after mass. The cost is \$15.



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.



TAI CHI ON HIATUS -- RESUMES JANUARY

Tai Chi which normally takes place in the School Gym on Saturday mornings at 8:00 is on a break for December. Sessions start again on **January 10**.

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.

YOUTH MINISTRY SURVEY

This survey is for the youth, ages 11 - 18. We want to hear from you. Please pick up a survey from the Youth Ministry Board in the church foyer and tell us what you think about the Youth Ministry. This will help us to make Youth Ministry a better experience for you.

NOTE: THERE IS NO BULLETIN NEXT WEEK. PLEASE KEEP THIS ONE HANDY FOR MASS TIMES.

DIOCESAN/ COMMUNITY NEWS

ADVENT NOVENA SPONSERED BY SAMBAYANANG PILIPINO

This novena, called SIMBANG GABI is the traditional Novena Mass in the Philippines in preparation for the birth of our Lord. The first night of this novena was here on Dec 15. The remaining nights are: **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)

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. Remaining masses will be celebrated at 5:00pm on Sunday and 7:00 Monday and Tuesday.

ANNUAL EPIPHANY PARTY

On **Sunday January 4, from 2:00-4:00pm**, Madonna House will host their Annual Epiphany Party in the parish hall of St. John the Apostle church at 5457 Trafalgar Street (across from Madonna House). Join us as we welcome the Three Kings. For more information call Madonna House at 604-267-1757.

LITTLE FLOWER ACADEMY ENTRANCE EXAM

Little Flower Academy (an independent High School for girls) would like to invite all prospective 2008-2009 Grade Eight candidates to register for the Entrance Exam taking place on **Saturday January 17, 2009 in the School Auditorium from 8:30am - 12:00pm**. Applications are available on the school website at www.lfabc.org or by calling 604-738-9016

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. Further information on Intensive Journal: www.intensivejournal.org.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Still looking for a gift for your spouse? How about a great weekend for the two of you. Next Marriage Encounter Weekend is **March 27 - 29, 2009**. For more information, contact Steve or Mary at sbohen@interchange.ubc.ca

PARISH INFORMATION

MASSSES

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) E-mail: stmarys_ym@yahoo.com
Coordinator: Arda Akoglu 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: Fr. Pierre Leblond, O.P.
Assistant Pastor: Fr. Mark Hoo, O.P.
Youth Ministry/Volunteer Coordinator: Arda Akoglu
Parish Secretary: Margherita Bordignon