



ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
 5251 JOYCE STREET
 VANCOUVER BC V5R 4G8
 TEL: (604) 435-9611 FAX: (604) 439-9413
 EMAIL: stmarys@telus.net
 WEBSITE: www.stmarysvancouver.ca

December 19, 2010

**Pastor's
 Corner**

DEPRESSED?

Do you feel surrounded by forces much bigger than you? Ecumenical forces that rob you of your job, or at least of your money? Psycho-cultural forces that put a wedge between you and your children, you and your parents? Religious conceptions that estrange you from God? That make God feel distant, uncaring, unconcerned?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, this Sunday's readings are for you. In the first reading Isaiah tries to awaken the young inexperienced Ahaz, King of Judah. His kingdom was like a little Switzerland surrounded by super-powers, Assyria to the east, Egypt to the west, Damascus to the north. Each of them aggressively jockeying for positions, trying to dominate the region by making deals with one another at the expense of the smaller countries, outmanoeuvring them. Young Ahaz receives contradictory advices about which alliance would be best, how he should negotiate and compromise. He becomes very perplexed, frozen in his indecision. He cannot act. He feels powerless, depressed. A small nobody amidst uncaring forces. Don't you feel like that sometimes? Are we not like Ahaz?

The prophet Isaiah, author of our first reading, tries to encourage Ahaz: "Act boldly. Do not rely on your own resources, neither on your so-called allies and friends. Trust God. Ask a sign from God. Think big, envision great things. Ask for it. God cares for you. He promises to David your ancestor that his lineage will be preserved. But Ahaz is filled with false piety like us. That's why he answered, "I will not ask for you a sign," meaning, "I am not worthy. Who am I that God cares for me?" But God does give him a sign anyway. "The virgin shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel."

Pastor's Corner Continued...

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Now let us fast forward 750 years. Joseph is depressed too. He just learned from an unknown source that his fiancée Mary, the love of his life, is pregnant and he knows he is not the father. In those days, a just man would have to deliver his fiancée to the authorities because she should be stoned to death. And Joseph is a very just man! But he loves her. He would rather have her live, even if it is not with him. If he repudiates her in secret and her family sends her to a distant region, maybe Mary could live a decent life with the natural father of her child. As for him, he is at an impasse. He will not be happy without Mary, and people will make fun of him. Then in a dream, an angel tells him that the sign Ahaz refused 750 years ago will be given to him, a son of David too. "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." God is offering Joseph an impossibly glorious way out of his dilemma. He will live with Mary for the rest of his life and will be called to the unique role of parenting the Messiah, the Son of God. In his "son" Jesus, God will be present to him and to all of us. "Seek the kingdom of God, the will of God, and everything else will be given you."

The greatness of Joseph resides in his incredible hope. He accepts to dream as big as God. Where Ahaz failed, where even Isaiah did not fully understand, Joseph let God expand his mind beyond imagination. He let God open his sense of the possible.

We too are called to make God present here and now through His birth in us. What will we gain? Everything! All the signs that we ask for, all the dreams that we dream, they are all finally related to Christ. Whatever troubles you are in, psychological, financial, social, God is crying "I am the key, open your mind. Look for that Christmas sign."



God Bless you, Father Pierre

PARISH NEWS

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS SCHEDULE

December 24: 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:30pm, Midnight

December 25: 9:30am, 11:15am, 1:00pm

December 31: 5:00pm, 11:30pm

January 1: 9:30am, 11:15am, 1:00pm

Please note the Christmas and New Year mass times are also posted on the parish website, in the church foyer, on the glass windows outside the church, and on the parish phone recording, option 2.



PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

The parish office will be closed on Monday, December 27 and Tuesday, December 28 for the Christmas holiday.

JR. YOUTH MINISTRY (grades 6 -8) – CHRISTMAS



Let's rejoice! It's almost Christmas and we are ready to celebrate. With skits, games, singing and food this will be a night full of fun and faith. Join SPARK on Monday, Dec 20 at 6:30pm in the church basement and share in our joy.

SR. YOUTH MINISTRY (grades 8-12) – GIVE BACK

It's time to give back. Yes that's right, this is the season where we once again are reminded of all the blessings God has given us and we try to give thanks by doing simple acts of kindness. So we have arranged a few opportunities for you to serve:
OPT 1: Serving at the Christmas Party for Seniors (Corpus Christi)-Sunday, Dec 26 from 10:30am to 1:00pm
OPT 2: Serving in a Soup Kitchen (The Door is Open) in downtown- Wednesday, Dec 29 from 10:00pm to 1:00am
OPT 3: Preparing sandwiches for the homeless (St. Vincent de Paul) - Friday, Dec 31 from 3:00pm-5:00pm
OPT 4: Serving sandwiches to the homeless in downtown (St. Vincent de Paul) -Friday, Dec 31 from 5:30pm to 8:00pm
 As you can see you have so many options to be the hands and feet of our Lord. I hope you take this opportunity to GIVE BACK. If you are interested please contact Arda at 604-435-9611 ext.6 or e-mail: stmarys_ym@yahoo.com. Deadline is Tuesday, Dec 21.

COFFEE SERVICE

There will be no coffee service for the next few weeks. Coffee service will resume on the weekend of January 8/9. ☕

PARISH NEWS

WEBSITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

 Our parish is updating its website and we want to make sure that it remains a dynamic and ever expanding tool of communication to help us achieve our Mission. The possibilities and opportunities are limited only by our imaginations. We are looking for parishioners with different skill sets who would like to be part of this exciting project, helping to steer our parish in the right direction on the information superhighway. Skills that may be beneficial are (but not limited to): good communication skills, creative writing, photography, graphic design, web-design, good visual skills and organizational skills. If you are interested please contact Arda at 604-435-9611 ext. 6 or at stmarys_ym@yahoo.com for more information.

NEW WINTER ITEMS FOR THE HOMELESS

 St. Mary's St. Vincent de Paul Society and St. Mary's Street Ministry need really warm stuff—winter gear including hats, gloves, socks, scarves, ear muffs, toques. We will be collecting donations of **NEW** winter items during December as part of our outreach program for the homeless. Please drop your donations into the box in the foyer marked “**Socks, Gloves, Scarves and Toques.**” **Please note that we are NOT collecting any other clothing at this time.** Again we thank you in advance on behalf of the poor, with your generosity we will have another great year.

DIOCESAN AND COMMUNITY NEWS

VANCOUVER EAST DEANERY PENITENTIAL SERVICES

Dec 21— St. Jude's 7pm & Dec 22— St. Helen's 7pm

NOTRE DAME OPEN HOUSE & PLACEMENT EXAM

The Open House will be held January 13 and the Placement Exam will be January 15 from 8:30am—Noon. More info at 604-255-5454 or www.ndrs.org.

ST. THOMAS MORE OPEN HOUSE & PLACEMENT EXAM

The Open House will be held January 18 at 6:30pm in the school gym. The evening is open to both parents and grade 7 students. The Placement Exam will be January 24 beginning at 1:30pm. In order to write this exam, parents must complete an application form which may be obtained from the STMC office during office hours, or download from the website at www.stmc.bc.ca.

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Mon. Dec 20: 6:00pm Bingo (School Gym)
6:30pm Jr YM -SPARK (Church Basement)

Tue. Dec 21: 6:45pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining)
7:00pm Christian Meditation (Rectory Basement)

Wed. Dec 22: 6:00pm Novena Our Lady Perpetual Help (Church)
7:00pm Mass/Adoration/Confession (Church)
9:00pm Benediction (Church)



Thu. Dec 23: 7:00pm Mass/Adoration (Church)
9:00pm Benediction (Church)



Fri. Dec 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE**
5:00pm Mass (Church)
7:00pm Mass (Church)
9:30pm Mass (Church)
12:00am Mass (Church)



Sat. Dec 25: **CHRISTMAS**
9:30pm Mass (Church)
11:15pm Mass (Church)
1:00pm Mass (Church)



Sun. Dec 26: 6:00pm CFC-FFL (Church Basement)
6:30pm Young Adult Bible Study (Rectory Dining)

Fri. Dec 31: **NEW YEAR'S EVE**
5:00pm Mass (Church)
11:30pm Mass (Church)

Sat. Jan 1: **NEW YEAR'S**
9:30am Mass (Church)
11:15am Mass (Church)
1:00pm Mass (Church)

***THE PASTORS AND STAFF OF ST. MARY'S WISH
YOU A MOST HOLY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS!***

PARISH INFORMATION

WEEKDAY MORNING MASSES: Monday - Friday: 8:00am

Weekday Morning Rosary 7:00am / Weekday Morning Lauds 7:30am

WEEKDAY EVENING MASSES: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7pm followed by Adoration at 7:45pm & Benediction at 9:00pm

SATURDAY MASS: Our Lady's Mass 12:00noon

SUNDAY MASSES: Anticipated Mass Saturday 5:00pm

Sunday: 8:00am / 9:30am / 11:15am / 1:00pm / 5:00pm / 7:00pm

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP:

Wednesday 6:00pm

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL:

Thursday: 8:00am & Saturday: 12:00noon

FIRST FRIDAY: Adoration throughout the day after morning mass
CONFESSIONS:

Weekdays: After all Masses (except Thursday Evening Mass)

Saturday: 11:15am to 11:55am, 4:15pm to 4:55pm, 6:10pm to 7:00pm

Sunday: Before & After all Masses

An appointment for confession may be made through the parish office

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

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

MARRIAGES:

One of the couple must be Catholic and a registered parishioner of St. Mary's Parish for at least one year before requesting the sacrament of marriage. Contact the Parish Office at least six months prior to the wedding date to register for the required diocesan Marriage Preparation Course.

BIBLE STUDY: Tuesday 6:45pm / Friday 9:00am / Saturday 12:45pm

Sunday 6:30pm (*Young Adult Bible Study*)

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

Tuesday and Wednesday 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Coordinator: Erwin Mow E-mail: stmarys.prep@yahoo.ca

YOUTH MINISTRY (YM) E-mail: stmarys_ym@yahoo.com

Coordinator: Arda Akoglu Website: www.saintmarysyouth.com

ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Principal: Ms Brenda Krivuzoff Website: www.stmary.bc.ca

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

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Monday to Friday: 9:00am to 5:00pm

Phone: (604) 435-9611 Fax: (604) 439-9413

PASTORS & STAFF:

Pastor

Fr. Pierre Leblond, O.P.

Assistant Pastor

Fr. Gabriel de Chadarevian, O.P.

Executive Assistant to Pastor

Vesna Jankovic

Office Manager

Ossie Fernandes

Youth Ministry/Volunteer Coordinator Arda Akoglu