



ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Pastor's Corner

Sunday December 23, 2007



Dear Parishioners, In 1967 Fr. Claude-Jean Nesmy, a Trappist monk from France, told this beautiful true story to explain the mystery of Christmas. I will never forget it. He was very close to an aristocratic family who lived in a French castle. They had only one daughter. She fell in love with a poor Arab man working temporarily in the castle. She wanted to marry him and go forever to live in his own country. Now the man was a very traditional Muslim and lived in a very poor hammock on the fringe of the desert. She would have to wear the complete "veil" over her face. Even her father would never see her face again. You can understand that the parents did put a lot of resistance. But their daughter was very persistent. Despite the great love she had for her mom and dad, she loved that man so much that she was ready for any sacrifice. The parents finally gave their consent but on one condition: that they would visit the hammock before their engagement and meet their future son-in-law's family. Imagine some French aristocrat visiting a poor family in the desert. They were shocked. They could see and "taste" the sand everywhere in the "house", in the food, in the "beds". But the daughter was not repelled. She married him and lived there, adopting all the customs and beliefs of her new family. Finally the parents had a great admiration for their daughter. "How much must she love him!", they kept saying to everyone who asked for an explanation.

Fr. Nesmy used this true story to teach the meaning of Christmas. Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, lived in a wonderful kingdom with the Father and the Holy Spirit and the angels. But he fell in love with us, with all human kind. He wanted to come down and live among us forever. He wanted to live in our dusty and sometimes cruel world because he wanted to walk with us, to hold our hand, to whisper the sweet words of love. He even desired to put on the "veil" of our human flesh and never depart from it. At first, the Father was reluctant, "My Son, you know what they will do to you! They will not give you a room to be born. They will only allow you to be born among the animals." But the Son answered, "Dad, abba, let me go!" One angel was so upset upon hearing that the Son would take flesh that he rebelled and became the Evil one. So the Father sent the Son with the Holy Spirit and gave them this mission. "Be my Light and my Joy in a world of darkness and hatred. Make this world as beautiful as my kingdom in heaven! It was the first Christmas, 2000 years ago. God bless you. *Fr. Pierre.*



THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

- Sun. Dec. 23:** 10:15am Willingdon Park Liturgy (4435 Grange St)
- Mon. Dec. 24:** 8:00am Mass (regular weekday Mass)
7:00pm Christmas Vigil Mass
9:00pm Christmas Vigil Mass
12:00mn Christmas Vigil Mass
- Tue. Dec. 25:** CHRISTMAS DAY (*Parish Office Closed*)
9:30am Mass - Nativity of the Lord
11:15am Mass - Nativity of the Lord
1:00pm Mass - Nativity of the Lord
- Wed. Dec. 26:** BOXING DAY (*Parish Office Closed*)
 10:00am Weekday Mass (**note time change**)
7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
9:15pm Benediction (Church)
- Thu. Dec. 27:**  8:00am Mass (regular weekday Mass)
7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
9:15pm Benediction (Church)
- Fri. Dec. 28:**  8:00am Mass (regular weekday Mass)
3:00pm Divine Mercy (Church)
6:15pm Divine Mercy (Church)
7:00pm Mass followed by Adoration (Church)
7:00pm Bible Sharing (Rectory Dining Room)
9:15pm Benediction (Church)
- Sat. Dec. 29:** 10:00am Legion of Mary (Church Basement)
12:30pm Bible Sharing (Church Basement)
- Sun. Dec. 30:** 3:00pm Baptisms (Church)

*God's Blessings, Peace, Love and Joy to
All St. Mary's Parishioners, Visitors and their families.
Merry Christmas!*



PARISH NEWS

MASS INTENTIONS AT ST. MARY'S

Starting January 1, 2008, we will strictly follow the Catholic Church's rule regarding mass intentions and stipends:
We are allowed only one mass intention per mass.

Because we will have fewer total mass intentions per year, we will have to limit everyone (individual or family) to a maximum of five (5) intentions per year. The priest **will not accept** last minute mass offerings because he will always have to check the calendar before confirming any mass intention. Therefore, the only way to book a mass intention is through the parish office – either in person, or by phone. PLEASE do not put your request on the altar or in the donation basket.

What if someone passes away and you want to book a mass intention as soon as possible? First, check with the parish office for availability. If nothing is available, give the name of the deceased person to the parish secretary or the priest **without any offering**. The priest will then mention his/her name during the prayers of the faithful, but **not** during the Eucharistic Prayer. This procedure will only be accepted for weekday masses and will be considered a prayer request, not a mass offering. Remember, mass intentions are read during the Eucharistic Prayer (repose of the soul only) and will be limited to **ONE** name or family name per Mass.

We understand that these rules will be upsetting for many of you; but they are necessary to prevent the scandal that could happen if the priests or the parish receives substantial amounts of money for each mass celebrated. *Fr. Pierre*

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MASS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

There is an exciting opportunity for youth and young adults who would like to be involved in service. As we take on this major initiative, we will need YOUR help. If you have the talent or the skills to read, lead, sing, play an instrument, or if you just like to help in the Youth Masses in your own simple way, please contact Eli Bautista at 604-435-9611 ext. 6 or via **stmarys_ym@yahoo.com**. Let us work together to make this fruitful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St. Mary's Street Ministry would like to thank all parishioners and friends who have supported us in our fundraising and "prayer raising". The religious icons were sold out, and we have over 90 additional prayer partners who signed up. Have a blessed and joyous Christmas!

PARISH NEWS

INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

To All You Young Adults (ages 18 and beyond)! St. Mary's is interested in forming a group of Young Adult Pilgrims (maximum 20) to the upcoming International Eucharistic Congress to be held in Quebec City from June 15 to 22, 2008. Fr. Mark will be accompanying the Pilgrims to Quebec City and we will be lodging in St. Dominic's Priory on the historic grounds of the Plains of Abraham, a stone's throw away from the final Mass for the Eucharistic Congress, and the Old City of Quebec. The cost for the pilgrimage **inclusive of** flight, transportation, food, lodging and the Congress, is only \$1,400 with spare change left over at that!!! If you are interested come attend the Info. Session on **Thu. Dec. 27 from 7 - 8pm in St. Mary's Church Basement**. Looking forward to seeing you there!

NEW YEAR'S EVE POTLUCK DINNER AND DANCE

St Mary's annual Potluck Dinner Dance on **Dec. 31** in the school gym. Doors open 6pm, Dinner will be served at 7pm followed by DJ dancing music until 12:30am Jan. 1, 2008. A refundable deposit of \$10.00 per family is required to reserve your spot and will be returned upon your arrival at the hall. Tickets will be available this Sunday and next Sunday Dec.30 (Deadline to collect tickets), after the 9:30am, 11:15am, 1:00pm & 7pm masses. For more info call Lita : 604-451-5720, Rosie: 604-436-3024, Letty : 604-521-6355.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUPPORT A FORMER STREET PERSON TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE DRUG AREA?

St. Mary's Street Ministry is helping a former street woman to move out of the drug area (downtown eastside) to her sponsor's place in Ladner on **Dec.31**. We believe this move will greatly help her in her recovery. The cost of a truck rental on Dec.31 is about \$280. We are short about \$210. If you have a 1-ton moving truck, are available to help move on Dec .31, or can help financially, please contact Mildred at 604-728-4284 urgently or hand over your donation at the registration desk.

YOUNG ADULT COFFEE NIGHT

Fri. Jan. 4, 8:30pm. Rectory basement. Join the young adult group as they discuss another episode of Catholic talk. Light Refreshments will also be served.



THANK YOU! FROM ST. MARY'S YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY

St. Mary's Young Adult Community would like to thank all who donated food to the SMYAC Food Drive last weekend. Your generosity provided 13 boxes of food to the Food Bank, to help the needy this Christmas. Thank you!

PARISH / COMMUNITY NEWS

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - YOUTH FREE THROW CHAMPIONSHIP

All youth ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2008 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship. The local competition will be held **Sat. Jan. 12, from 2pm-5pm at St. Mary's Parish School Gym**. The Free Throw Championship is sponsored annually, with winners progressing through local, district, and state competitions. Participants are required to furnish proof of age and written parental consent. For entry forms or additional info. contact: **Ryan at rbauzon@gmail.com** or 604-603-8870.



A VIGIL CELEBRATING JOHN MAIN'S LIFE & LEGACY

Dec. 30, 7:00pm, at St. Augustine's Church, 2028 W. 7th Ave., Vcr. 2007 marks the 25th anniversary of John Main's death, a Benedictine monk who revived the practice of Christian Meditation. Join us for prayers, reflection, readings from the work of John Main, Taize chant & Christian Silent Meditation. Presented by the BC Christian Meditation Community. All are Welcome!

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC SINGLES CLUB NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE

Dec. 31 at Holy Family Parish Hall (4851 Beatrice St. Vancouver). Doors open at 8:30 pm, dancing 9:00 pm-1:00 am. \$35 members/\$40 non-members, payment due by December 15. Call Barry 604-327-5425 or Tina 604-438-7618.

PRO-LIFE MASS & VIGIL

Peaceful, prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents on **Sat. Jan. 5**, 9:00am Mass at Our Lady of Mercy Parish, 7455 10th Ave., Bby., followed by Rosary at Royal Columbian Hospital.

V.I.P. (VOCATIONS IN PROGRESS)

We invite single Catholic men (ages 17 & up) to join us as we look at "**Many are called but few are chosen, Mt 22:1-14.**" The meeting will be held on **Sun. Jan. 6, 2008 at St. Andrew's Parish, 480 E. 47th Ave. Vcr.** (between Fraser & Main St). We start at 7:30pm, in the Luminous Hall. For more info. please call Fr. Hien Nguyen or Fr. Tom Smith at the Vocations Office 604-443-3254. Or visit our website at: www.vocationsvancouver.com *Your questions are Very Important to us.*



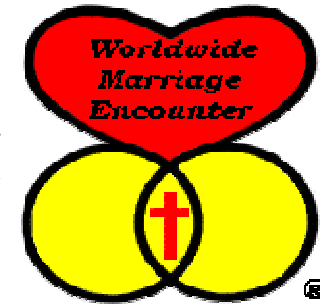
EPIPHANY PARTY AT MADONNA HOUSE

Please join us at - 5450 Trafalgar St., Vcr. on **Jan. 6** from 2pm - 4pm. We will celebrate the coming of the THREE KINGS (in person!) and share with you the traditions of Madonna House for this wonderful feast. Phone 604-267-1757.

COMMUNITY NEWS

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

The best gift a father can give his children is to love their mother. Consider a Worldwide Encounter Weekend as a **Christmas gift** for your spouse and yourself. Register for an upcoming Weekend, **Mar. 28 - 30'08**. Call Steve & Mary 604-876-7298 sbohnen@interchange.ubc.ca



PARISH INFORMATION

MASSES Mon. - Fri. 8:00am; Sat. 12:00 pm
Wed. - Fri. 7:00pm followed by Adoration & Benediction at 9:15pm
Saturday - 5:00pm (**Anticipation**)
Sunday - 8:00am, 9:30am, 11:15am, 1:00pm, 7:00pm

RECONCILIATION Sunday & Weekdays - Before and after all Masses.
Saturday - 11:15-11:45am; 4:15-4:45pm;
(An appointment for reconciliation may be made at any time)

HOLY COMMUNION Available to shut-ins. Contact Parish Office.
NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL
Thursday - 8:00am; Saturday - 12:00pm

FIRST FRIDAY 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

BAPTISM 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.

RCIA Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. Contact the Parish Office.
PREP Religious education program for children attending public schools.
Coordinator: Eli Bautista Tuesday and Wednesday 6:30-8:00pm

ST. MARY'S YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY (SMYAC)
Leader: Jonquil Francis and Joseph D'silva
Contact: smyac_team@yahoo.ca Website: www.smyac.ca
YOUTH MINISTRY E-mail: stmarys_ym@yahoo.com
Coordinator: Eli Bautista Website: www.saintmarysyoung.com

ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Kevin Smith (Principal)
K-Grade 7 (604) 437-1312 Fax (604) 437-1193 Website: <http://www.stmary.bc.ca>

PARISH OFFICE HOURS Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm
Pastor: Fr. Pierre Leblond, OP
Assistant Pastor: Fr. Mark Hoo, OP
Youth and PREP Coordinator: Eli Bautista
Parish Office: Margherita Bordignon / Ossie Fernandes