

Christmas

December 25, 2005

*Good news and great joy to all the world:
today is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord!*

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Dec. 26 No Mass, Dec. 27: 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 28 to 30: 8:30 a.m.



*Merry Christmas! Joyeux Noel! Buon Natale! Feliz Navidad!
Maligayang Pasko! Fröhliche Weihnachten*

IN OUR PARISH

FAITH FIRST NEWS



N.B. There will be **no** Mass sign-in for Christmas Masses (Dec 24 or 25), or New Year Masses (Dec 31 & Jan 1). Sign-in will resume on Jan 7 & 8.

*The Faith First Team wishes you all a very Merry Christmas & Happy
New Year!*

CHRISTMAS FLOWER OFFERINGS

*Thank you to all who covered the cost of our beautiful Christmas
flowers and plants! Dear Lord grant your abundant blessing on all
those on whose behalf these offerings were made:*

Anthony & Grozdana Listes, Douglas Floreani, Mrs. Joan Harkin,
Salvatore Ilaqua, Stella & Stanley Szuszkowski, Al Mack, Tadeusz
Rzeszutek, Alfonso Mio, Louis A. Pereira, Agnes O'Donnell, Jane &
Peter Holloran, Anne Marie Watkinson, Ellis Charasidis.

~Christmas at Becket~



Thursday	December 29	Feast of St. Thomas à Becket	8:30 a.m.
Friday	December 30	Holy Family	8:30 a.m.
Saturday	December 31	New Year's Eve: Mary, Mother of God	
		Holy Hour for God's Peace in the World: 3:15 p.m. Mass: 4:30 p.m.	
		Vigil of Adoration and Prayer in Cahill Hall 10:00 p.m. to midnight	
Sunday	January 1	New Year's Day	9 and 11 a.m.

N.B.: no 5:00 p.m. Mass on December 25 or January 1

"Come and worship Him."



STRUGGLING WITH GRIEF?

A group workshop series is offered for people on the West Island suffering a significant loss, such as the death of a loved one, divorce or a major change in life. From Death to New Life: A Christian View of Loss. Practical tools for working through bereavement will be presented in talks, reflections and discussions, led by Deacon Richard Boileau. Next series scheduled on **Fridays beginning Jan. 20 to March 10 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** For details, call 697-9813 or write richard.boileau@videotron.ca



NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE

Doors open at 7:30 p.m. \$30.00 per person. Dinner at 9 p.m.
Tickets: Phil 696-4167 or Guy 626-8421.

LECTORS NEEDED

We still require lectors for the 5 pm Sun. Mass. **Please consider this important ministry opportunity:** 626-4111.



GREETERS NEEDED

If you are interested in doing something for Becket that does not involve meetings, why not become a "Greeter". We could use you individually or why not greet as a family - a wonderful way of getting the children involved. You do not greet each week, but approximately every 3 - 4 weeks, and for that mass you are asked to be here one-half hour early. We



are looking for Greeters for the Saturday 4:30 mass, Sunday masses 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. We would welcome any of you who would be able to greet even one time at one of the Christmas Eve Masses as we require many people to help. For more info - call Norma 620-2019.

USERS OF CONTRIBUTIONS ENVELOPES

Please pick up your 2006 envelope boxes located at the back of the church. They are arranged alphabetically by name.

OUR PARISH BULLETIN ADS make our bulletin free of charge for the parish. Please support our advertisers and welcome the new ones!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR PRIESTS!

A few weeks ago you may have supported the first of five yearly appeals to fill in an actuarial loss in the priests' pension fund caused by Canadian financial institutions upgrading the male life expectancy from 77 to 79.4 years and by low interest rates. We're all glad to hear that men are now expected to live a little longer, but it's also a problem that more priests are over 65 and drawing a pension than are contributing to the fund. Your contributions: \$1981.00. Thank you!

Did you know that before 1954 priests received no salary, but only \$2 (now \$5) for each Mass, and what people occasionally gave them? In 1954 the Archdiocese noted the great changes in economic and social conditions of our society. The diocese could no longer provide for a priest's lifetime; so priests were given a salary to provide for themselves.

This was the first 1954 salary scale. Pastor \$175/month - \$2100/year; Assistant \$60 - \$720; Administrator \$100 - \$1200. Each priest received room and board valued at \$75/month. Today, there is a single scale for all priests and bishops: \$1178 net/month - \$19,790/year. Room and board is valued at \$9000/year and the Fabrique contributes around \$2000 to each priest's pension and health plans. There are also vacation and continuing education benefits. However, priests must assume their own vehicle and travel costs. Given the precarious nature of the lopsided clergy pension fund, some priests invest in an additional RRSP. Couples do better, but at least these benefits will allow our priests, at the end of their lives, for a few years, the possibility of choosing where to live, after a lifetime of living in the workplace. For more information, see Fr. Gilles

OUR PRAYERS AND WISHES FOR YOU AND YOURS

These 12 days of Christmas, until the Epiphany, are the most intense days of the year, for many reasons. The familiar hymns function as magic keys unlocking the hidden chambers of forgotten memories, forgotten until the tune or words, or else some fragrance of pine or fir or cooking or baking stir them up. In that moment, the memories can be as powerful as being there – at times it can take our breath away how we find ourselves inside the actual memory – in the actual event once again. We may not have the visitation of the Ghost of Christmas Past, as Ebenezer Scrooge did, but it can feel pretty close to that. Some of the memories are delightful, joyful, and fill us to the brim with heartfelt warmth, love, and gratitude. Others, however, may be profoundly sad, when we remember a loved one who is no longer with us here. The gift the Christ Child brings – as we remember that He too died – is a radiant reminder of the victory He won over death, sin, and fear. All who died accepting God's merciful love and peace, after a life or at least some time of humility, caring, and kindness to others, are welcomed by God into the eternal dwelling places. For them we rejoice. Those that died filled with regret but willing to receive God's mercy may yet find their way to Him. For them we pray. We who are still here amid life's joys and sorrows, victories and defeats, holiness and sin, are all in it together. To each other we extend heartfelt Christmas greetings, with the tender mutual regard of comrades in arms. Unlike Scrooge, we are visited not by Ghosts of Christmas Present or Future, but by familiar and strange faces in the course of our busy days and nights. The true story of Joseph caring for his wife Mary and her Child Jesus in the harsh conditions that were theirs encourages yet again to take heart and find joy wherever we find ourselves. *This is our prayer and heartfelt wish for you and all your loved ones this Christmas Season and in the New Year 2006*, from all our wonderful Staff at St. Thomas à Becket Parish. Fathers Gilles & Placido

YOUTH



TEEN SINGERS, (13+ yrs) NEEDED for 5 pm Sunday Mass, twice each month. Join us! Patrick Viegas 453-3986.

BECKET PANTRY

Desperately needed: Baby car seat & regulation crib (post 1986). Also, small dresser for baby & bunk beds.



AROUND TOWN



290 CRECHES AT THE MUSEUM OF THE ORATORY
290 creches from 110 countries are exhibited at the Oratory's museum until February 26th, 2006. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. A small donation is welcome at the entrance.

RADIO VILLE MARIE 91.3 FM MONTREAL

Celebrate Christmas (9:30 a.m.) and New Years Day (9:30 a.m.) with radio host Lawyer Joseph-John Varga and guests Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte, Bishop Mancini and Msgr. Michel Parent.

NEW YEAR'S EVE PEACE AND JUSTICE MASS

Mass for peace will take place Dec. 31, 9:30 pm at St. Monica's Parish 6405 Terrebonne N.D.G. Reception to follow. All welcome.

WHO WILL REPLACE US?

We have been blessed by and have enjoyed several young priests here at Becket – Frs. Mike Shaw from 1975 to 1979, Claude Saldanha, Ed Mac Kinley and Pat Donnelly in the 1980's, Frank Coyle from 1989 to 1994, Fred Kirouac from 1994 to 1998, Robert Clark from 1995 to 2002, then Stephen Otvos as an Intern only, Tom Dowd from 2002 to 2005, and now Placido Macarine. It is noticeable that there are fewer generous, hopeful and courageous faith-filled young men coming forward than the older men we are losing to promotions, ill health, and their eternal reward. Still, we are encouraged as we remember that Jesus began with only 12.

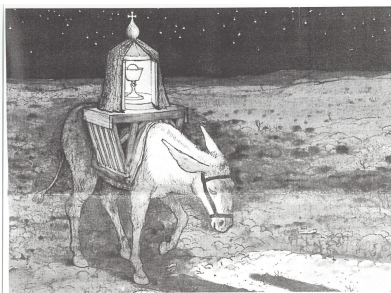
In the course of this 40th Anniversary Year, we ask with joyful hope and anticipation, “Who will be the young man or woman to be the first to declare an attraction to a “religious” vocation?” Have there ever been any young men of Becket who became priests, deacons, or religious? Or have any young women become religious? Of course, our faith is in Jesus – the Anointed One promised long centuries ago to the Jewish People and then finally given by God our Father to us through a radiant, faith-filled young woman, Mary. She found great love, devotion, and support in her husband Joseph – a just and devout man filled with love of God and neighbor. It’s so mysterious how God’s call to women and men to marry in his love is so intimately bound up with other calls He then makes to their offspring: to Marriage again, like their parents or to priesthood or religious life.

“Lord pour out your Spirit on us!”

THANK YOU BECKET FOR PROLONGING CHRISTMAS!

May our thanks warm your kind hearts, all you parishioners who in 2005 so generously shared of your time and talent. May our Father’s blessings each day sustain you in your efforts all year as you **“Reach out to build a loving community of faith!”** Heartfelt thanks to you talented and patient people who make our church and hall beautiful in visuals and in music to help us worship the Lord. Thanks to all who participate in the animation of our Sunday Liturgies and worship all year, help us care for the poor and suffering of this world, or offer various services to Becket families.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Christmas Card Design for Fr. Callahan by Bill Kurelek

MARY FIRST ACCEPTED TO CARRY GOD

In that sense, the Blessed Virgin Mary was the first Ciborium, Tabernacle, or Chapel after the Temple in Jerusalem to contain the true and living Presence of God. The donkey who carried her had to obey, but she carried Jesus, our Bread of Life, in deep contemplation and love. Jesus wants us also to carry Him with love.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS – THANK YOU FOR CARING!!!

On behalf of all the families who have just gotten their Christmas Basket – making it possible for them to taste some of the joy that first delighted the shepherds in Bethlehem – **THANK YOU!** May your sacrifices in serving Jesus in his need bring you – the **PERFECT JOY** of finding **HIM** with you always – **this Christmas and through 2006! Your Becket Pantry**

Feast of St. Thomas à Becket ~ December 29th

PRAYER TO ST. THOMAS À BECKET

Beloved Patron of our Parish, you were known to enjoy both your work and the simple, wholesome pleasures of life. Others around you worked and played hard, often giving themselves to sinful excesses. You did not judge or condemn them. Instead, you were chaste and tried to practice moderation. When you rose to power and wealth, you enjoyed that too, and were extravagantly generous with your friends and guests. You were doing your best to serve God and the Church, while enjoying fully the life God had given you.

Then there came another vocation, one that pierced you to the very depths of your soul: to imitate Christ more fully as one called to lead the Church by example at the very top of its authority in Canterbury and England, in the role of Archbishop and priest. Once again, you surrendered your heart and soul to the Lord, devoting yourself and all your possessions to the poor, the Church, and God. You entrusted your fears to the Lord and faced the anger of the king, enduring even a brutal death.

Pray that we in your Parish here may all respond to God's advances and invitations: that like you, we may courageously and boldly obey God, wherever his call finds us. Pray that none of us may be dismayed, either by the good we have failed to do or by the evil we may have done or caused – intentionally or not – but quickly seek forgiveness from God, our neighbor, our enemy, or any other we have wronged. Pray that we be generous in mercy, and quick to forgive any who have wronged or offended us.

Pray for me/us... (a special intention)... and to know each day the JOY of accepting Jesus as our Redeemer, of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and of bringing many others to Jesus by proclaiming the GOOD NEWS with our lives. Pray that we promote Christian vocations, support marriage and family life, transmit and form the gift of Christian faith in all, and draw lost sheep to the living water of God's Divine Mercy. Intercede for us, that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit and labor in the communion of saints – dwelling in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, our Lord and Savior – with the intercession of Notre Dame de Ville Marie, Our Lady of Lourdes, that in Him we too may do the will and serve the glory of our Heavenly Father! Amen!

GRACE BEFORE CHRISTMAS DINNER

“God of great gentleness, in love you give us these days of Christmas to be our joy and delight. Hold us close to each other. Unite us in spirit with those who have died and with those who are distant, with the hungry and all your children in Bethlehem, where we will join with Mary and Joseph, the animals and angels, and all the stars in heaven in singing you praise:



‘Glory to God in the highest! And peace to God's people on earth!’”

