

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 15, 2006

World Day of Migrants and Refugees

“If the *dream* of a peaceful world is shared by all, if the refugees’ and the migrants’ contribution is properly evaluated, then humanity can become more and more of a universal family and our earth a true *common home*.”

(John Paul II, 2004 Message)



WEEKDAY MASSES Jan 16 & 17: 7:30 p.m. Jan 18, 19 & 20: 8:30 a.m.

IN OUR PARISH

FAITH FIRST NEWS



1st Communion children's gathering (blue calendar) Jan. 18, 4:30 & 6:15.

1st Communion Parent's Gathering Jan. 19, 7 to 9 p.m.

Confirmation children's gathering Jan. 26, 4:30 & 6:15.

SOLIDARITY WITH MALAWI ORPHANS CROWNS ADVENT MISSION

The following report has been prepared by Deacon Richard

My dear sisters and brothers, our Advent parish mission provided parishioners and others with a unique opportunity to encounter the infant Jesus by reaching out to strangers. In solidarity, we focused on the AIDS orphans in a remote part of Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world.

In collaboration with a team of those who shared a vision of making a difference in the lives of 4,000 malnourished and often forgotten children, I dreamed of raising money in aid of three life-giving initiatives: to supply nutrition supplements, to provide paediatric medicines and to help build a modest vocational training facility.

We did this for them, but we also did it for the people of St. Thomas à Becket. People here have huge hearts. We wanted to give you a chance to witness the love that binds us as a faith community. We wanted you to see how compassion can grow when it takes the form of solidarity, particularly with strangers who reveal how awesome the family of God is.

The result is truly astounding. Donations came in all sizes, as did the donors. There were almost 500 donors and as many stories of lives changed to some extent by the orphans of Karonga.

Among these is a group of young children who pooled all their money to make this special gift of selfless love; a 75-year-old woman who always wanted to adopt a child; a woman who gave a gift card to her teenaged niece who replied that this was the best gift she had received. One well-known parishioner told us how the mission had changed him and his perceptions of what Christmas is really all about. Overall, it's very clear that the Malawi orphans project has impacted far more people than just those who purchased cards.

The Malawi campaign at Becket is now over. It's time for Fania to resume its regular fund-raising activities in support of the children that are at the heart of the parish's Helping Others program.

For those who are interested, information regarding the Malawi Program is available at www.cribandcross.com. You can still go to "Hope for Africa" and check out the page marked "Malawi Program." cribandcross Franciscan Ministries © remains committed to our little sisters and brothers in Malawi.

While monies will be forwarded soon, a detailed report - containing stories and photos - will be provided after June when the Dottos will visit Project Lusubilo and deliver paediatric medicines in person to Sister Beatrice in Karonga. Meanwhile, please pray for her work with those whose lives are so profoundly affected by the AIDS crisis in Africa. Keep thinking of your little sisters and brothers, smiling with hearts healed with hope that you made possible.

40TH ANNIVERSARY NEWS

We will continue our video interviews **after all morning Masses on January 22 and 29**. Please **sign up** for the time of your choice in the Narthex. Interviews are open to **all** parishioners, young and old alike. Come share your stories and memories. You are all part of it!



We cordially invite you to take part in the next session of:

"THE MARRIAGE COURSE"!



This course provides couples with the skills they need to build a strong & healthy marriage that will last a lifetime!

The course will take place on Monday evenings at 7:30 and begins on Feb 13th. Over a period of 7 sessions, in a relaxing home setting, participants will spend quality time learning about themselves, their spouse, and their life together. **No** group discussions. All discussions are private between the spouses.

This course will appeal to couples who want to enhance an already good marriage, those in the first 5 years of marriage, or those struggling with issues in their relationship. Consider investing a little time to enable your marriage to reach its full potential!

Details & registration forms are available at the back of the church, or you can contact Nathalie or John for more information at 695-7896.

PLEASE PRAY FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

There are 5 men currently being formed for priesthood in the Archdiocese of Montreal: *Martin Andrews, Francesco Giordano, Michael Brian Leclerc, Jason Piper, and Jean-François Cuggy*. Please pray for them and for all the men the Lord is calling; that they may hear his voice in them and respond with generous and courageous hearts. Lord bless them.

What do we do with the Gift of the Magi?

The word on the slip of paper you received (If you missed it get one from the basket at the Manger until February 2nd.) is a *spiritual gift*. You may already have it and the Lord wants you to use it more or else the Lord now wants to give it to you. Open your heart to the Lord: ask Him to give you this gift and help you use it, and guide you by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Find out more about this gift and begin using it. **Enjoy!!!**



FAMILY BREAKFAST

Sponsored by Becket's Knights of Columbus: Family Breakfasts will be held on the first Sunday of the month after the 11:00 a.m. Mass beginning Feb 5. \$3.00 per person maximum \$10.00 per family.

GROUPS AND MINISTRIES 2006 REPORT TO DIOCESE

At the beginning of each calendar year, the Archdiocese requires every pastor to submit a "Pastoral Situation Report" for the parish. In order to help your priests fulfill this requirement, would Becket Parish leaders of groups and ministries please provide a brief report showing the name and kind of group or ministry, the # of leaders, # of other members = total members – as at year's end – and please email or phone in by January 31st. You may add any details and progress you wish to bring to our attention. This is an exercise in coresponsibility. Thank you very much. Fr. Gilles

OUR 2006 LENTEN MISSION

This year, we have asked Fr. Eric Nicolai to offer our Lenten Mission. He is a priest of Opus Dei, a movement fully approved to develop and operate in our Church, but which elicits opposing sentiments. Parish missions are of course optional events and are offered for the benefit of parishioners. No one is obliged to attend. However, some might object to the very fact of the movement's offer of such a mission. Should you like further info on Opus Dei you may consult the following websites:

www.opusdei.org www.odan.org

See the January Catholic Times page 10 for the review of a book by noted U.S. journalist John Allen on Opus Dei. Please consider these few points. Everything in our Church involves a meeting between the divine and the human, which is why it is so easy to find something to criticize in the RC Church. It offers a big target easy to hit. Because Jesus is human, it was easy for people to find fault in Him too. God gave us reason and expects us to use our brains; so, by all means, critique Opus Dei and be open to critique yourself. Second point. What Opus Dei tries to do is what we all talk about but feel helpless to do much about, namely, try to evangelize the culture or resist the forces in our culture that erode the truth or moral values. In comparison to our hedonistic culture, any attempt to pray or to practice mortification of the flesh will appear fanatical. What is needed is a balanced view. We have asked Fr. Eric to provide a mission to address family life, work, formation of conscience for integrity, and prayer, which is dialogue with God. We're hoping this mission will be something like "A Dummy's Guide to Sanctity, or How To Make Stress Work for You." All that we ask is that if you are open to the blessing God offers, come to the mission with an open mind and heart, take the good and leave the rest. I personally know Fr. Eric and respect him as a man and a priest. Fr. Gilles

FITNESS CLASSES



with Dolores Paquette, C.F.I. Mon & Wed. 9:15- 10:15 in the parish hall until March 29. **N.B. Classes will be held on Tues and Thurs for the week of Jan 23 only.** Exercise mat required. Music for all ages. Registration & info 620-7158.

WHY SHOULD WE VOTE IN A NEW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

We can easily find fault with our country. We would all prefer to pay less tax; on the other hand, I'm grateful not to live in a land where people can come in the middle of the night and drag you away with no one to ask any questions or do anything about it. Maybe it's the premium for living in a civil society. We may not like the options we get, but we do have a voice. Why not make it count? Pray, listen, read, think, discuss, vote. Fr. Gilles

NO CELL PHONES PLEASE...

in churches, restaurants, hospitals, theatres or movie houses, beauty salons or golf courses, in fact, anywhere you yourself would want a little privacy and not have to listen to other people's conversations. There's more to it than that. People are beginning to report a new feeling of being enslaved by the cell phone. It's like a big iron ball on a chain around your neck: no matter where you go or what you're doing, somebody can ring you up and you feel obliged to answer. **SHUT IT OFF!** Check regularly for messages and **CHOOSE** the ones you want to answer. **DELETE** the rest. Simple. Put yourself back in the driver's seat. Give your family ample warning.

BECKET PANTRY

Needed: crib with mattress and if possible, linens for newborn. 626-4111.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Please call the parish office at 626-4111 and let us know of any donors who made donations to Becket Pantry through the Christmas season, so that we can offer our appreciation and thanks. *C. Moss*

AROUND TOWN

COR MONTREAL



(Christ in Others Retreat) is a Catholic Youth Movement for ages 15-25. Through games and activities, discussions, prayer, and just living and sharing together for a weekend, the COR retreat reveals to youth the presence of Christ in others and in the Eucharist, and opens to them the power of Christian love. The 16th COR retreat will be held **Jan 27, 28 & 29** at Queen of Angels Academy (Dorval) Any youth between 15-25 are invited to attend. Mario & Ismini Borrelli 450-969-1448 cormontreal@yahoo.ca www.cormontreal.ca

BECKET PLAYERS

Becket Players this year is putting on a Broadway show called "Rockin' Robin Hood" as well as Cabaret 2006. Mark your calendars for box office opening day March 4, at 9:00 a.m. Show dates are as follows: Gala: April 21. Regular show dates: April 22, 28, 29, May 5, 6, 12 & 13. Special rates for all organizations who follow the Becket Players mission of helping children with educational, nutritional or medical needs can purchase tickets in Row 6 only (minimum 2 tables) Call 979-3029.

LECTURE BY JEAN VANIER

As part of the Peace and Conflict Academic Series 2005-2006, The Centre for the Arts in Human Development is pleased to present **Finding Peace: A Perspective by Jean Vanier** Wed., February 1, 7 p.m., Oscar Peterson Concert Hall, 7141 Sherbrooke W. (East side of Loyola Campus).

Admission is free, however tickets are required for this event and are available for a limited time through the parish office: 626-4111.

It has been profoundly satisfying these past weeks for us to join Stephanie and Laurie Dotto in the quest to come to the aid of the Malawi orphans by offering Christmas cards representing an offering of food, medicine or the materials needed to construct a trade school. We hope that the momentum will build and spread wider across our country; so that 30 years from now the situation will either have become stable without need of our help or a network will have become sufficient to the task. We began reaching out to the malnourished and starving fatherless children of Honduras in much the same way 30 years ago in 1976. The local situation of these children and succeeding generations has slowly, incrementally improved, but these folk are not yet able to provide for themselves the essentials of life as we know them. The causes are partly local, deeply embedded in the culture and the society, but they are also rooted in our own multinational corporations and the greed principle governing them. People don't matter; only profit does. We are taking the occasion of our 40th Anniversary at Becket to renew our Fania Response Team. Want to know more about Honduras and our kids there? Want to help? Speak or write Spanish? Want to support our youth planning to go on a field mission to Fania in 2007? Climb aboard! Call us at the office; use the password "Fania" and leave your name and phone or email or both, and we'll get back to you. Every child in the Fania school recently sent us a love note, along with a letter and report signed by all the staff. These are wonderful people. Help us understand them and dialogue with them. Join the Team and check it out. Fr. Gilles

40TH ANNIVERSARY FANIA VIGNETTE

For St. Thomas à Becket Parish, the formal history of Fania begins with the vision of the first pastor, Fr. Charles Cahill, when he asked Dorinda and Brendan to find a project that would be uniquely "ours". It began with "a little clinic, really not much more than a shack. But so many children come each day, many of them dying, some too late to be saved." It appealed to Fr. Cahill's love for children, and our Helping Others Fund records show expenses for "Our Orphanage and Nursery in Honduras" in the amounts of \$3,975.00 in 1977, and \$8,750.00 in 1978 and 1979. A young nurse, Reine Caza, at the Montreal Children's Hospital, worked as a volunteer, and remembers the tiny clinic as dirty and rat infested – a really terrible place to work and to receive people. It was in almost complete disarray, with virtually no medicine and few supplies. Dorinda reported to Fr. Cahill, "Government funds have been cut to almost nothing. The staff are completely demoralized. They don't know what to do. They can't cope anymore." Father Cahill's response was swift and sure. "Do you think that \$10,000.00 will be enough to start?" In January 1980, they moved their work to Nueva Suyapa. Reine was of the same mind as Sr. Georgette, a truly apostolic spirit, always going out into the community to meet families and to seek out the poorest children in need of help. Their approach was simple: find families with children in need – especially malnutrition – and help them with both nutrition for the child and basic education in hygiene, diet and meal preparation for the mother. Word spread quickly throughout Nueva Suyapa of the arrival of the little nurse from Canada, and the numbers of daily visitors to the clinic seemed to double each month.....

FINDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN LOVE AND THE LAW

We know that Jesus brought a remarkable revelation presenting God the Father to humanity as a God of love. Jesus insisted that He was doing the will of his heavenly Father in the mercy and forgiveness He extended to sinners; while at the same time declaring He had not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. Some early Jewish disciples panicked at all this talk about love and felt that more emphasis needed to be put on observing the Law. Otherwise, they said, all that talk about love will lead to contempt for the Law and people will think they can do whatever they want. They would offend God by presuming that no matter how much they sin, God will always forgive them out of love. They had a point, but they went too far with it, demanding that all new Christians from other lands and who were not Jewish should become Jewish first and accomplish everything that is required of devout Jews.

Paul resisted that approach, making a ferocious defense for the freedom of the children of God obtained for us by Jesus through his death on behalf of all sinners and by his resurrection from the dead. Jesus was asked by his Father to suffer on our behalf all the consequences of our sins; so that He might lift us out from under the crushing burden of guilt caused by them. He died that we might live. This is the meaning and power of our Baptism as God adopts us as his very own daughters and sons and infuses into us a true share in his divine life. The result in us is an attachment, a devotion, and an ardent love for God. We know this loving vitality of God dwells in us by its fruit, an outpouring of love and care for others, especially for the poor and forgiveness and mercy for enemies. The Apostle John goes so far as to say that if we do not love our neighbor and forgive our enemies, then our claim to love God is a lie, because there is no evidence that God's love has taken root in us.

The Apostles are unanimous on one further point. If we truly love God we no longer sin or go back to a sinful way of life. Those in whom the love of God dwells don't sin and in fact fulfill the Law, going way beyond just obeying the Law, and actually fulfilling the Law's original intention. Now we are living in a Church community of faith and in a society in danger of losing, or already having lost, a balance between love and the observance of the warnings of the Law. Until World War II our society was a closed society, with very clear definitions of right and wrong and punishments that came down rather hard on offenders, to preserve order through fear if not respect for the Law. With the war years and beyond, the harshness of the previous decades stimulated in society a desire for a balance and there was a return to greater emphasis on love.

Those who are old enough to look back on the last 50 years can see that we have heard so much about love that as a society we are in danger of no longer knowing what we're talking about when we use the word love. Do we mean sex? Passion? Caring? Our appetite for what appears to be love has taken us almost over the brink of the precipice into self-destruction by drawing us, every so slowly, into an attitude of contempt for the Law. When Jesus preached about and demonstrated divine love, this is not what He had in mind. He came to fulfill the Law, not abolish it, He said. So, as a Church and society, we are once again in need of finding the balance. "Lord, have mercy on us, and show us the Way, You, our Truth and Life."