

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Saturday December 31, 2016 5:00pm Don D'Alessio by Monique & family Sunday January 1, 2017 10:00am Maureen Baker by Ray Baker NO MASS Saturday, January 7th 5:00pm Marie Heagle (10 th Ann.) by Mike & family Sunday, January 8th 9:00am Shirley Ravary by Jacqueline & Mariel Labelle 11:00am Pro Populo	Saint Sylvester New Year's Day Epiphany of the Lord	IF YOU ARE SICK OR NOT FEELING WELL: AVOID SHAKING HANDS AT THE SIGN OF PEACE. PLEASE USE THE HAND SANITIZER AT THE ENTRANCES OF THE CHURCH WHEN YOU ARRIVE AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THE CHURCH.
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The Sanctuary Lamp is "In memory of Bernie Racine" by Aline Racine.

Jesus, give me the courage, the strength, and the perseverance to live this day in your love!

Dear parishioners!

I offer my best wishes for a very Happy New Year to each and every one of you. I pray to the Lord that this new year will be as beautiful and as prosperous as possible. May the blessings of the Lord be upon you and your family as we enter into a new year!

I would like to thank every one for your friendship. A special "thank you" to the kind people who have been so generous with me on the occasion of Christmas (gifts, cards with good wishes, words of encouragement, pastries, etc...) It was wonderful! Thank you! And may the Lord reward you for it.

God love you!

Fr. Jacques Labelle



Receipts for income tax ...will be ready for distribution in February. There's only one receipt for your contributions to the Parish for Sunday offerings, special collections, and your donations for 2016.

ACT OF HOPE: O my God, relying on your almighty power and infinite mercy and promises. I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

ACT OF CHARITY My God, I love you with all my heart above all else, because you are infinitely good and our everlasting happiness. Out of love for you, I love my neighbor as myself and I forgive anyone who has hurt me. Lord, enable me to love you more and more.

Following a Guiding Star

Who were the Magi? Were there only three and were they kings? Were their names Balthazar, Melchior and Gaspard? Of the three, was one black? These minor details don't matter.

Matthew the Evangelist wrote that the Magi came from the East, east of Jordan, and that they had been alerted by the appearance of a strange star in the sky. These astrologers represented the pagan world's acceptance of Jesus as Lord and its openness to hearing the Good News of salvation. When questioned, one of the Magi offered this explanation: *Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.*



It is not important to know that the star followed a mysterious or unusual trajectory, that it was or wasn't visible, or to depend on the word of sympathetic or hostile witnesses. What is significant is this star was a sign that announced the coming of the Saviour King, the Good News that the angels proclaimed to the shepherds. Just as for the pagan Magi and the Jewish shepherds, the Lord is our guide to salvation.

Matthew stressed the meeting of the unusual visitors with Herod and his entourage in Jerusalem. The leaders did not go to the grotto in Bethlehem and their refusal to believe in Jesus set into motion a sequence of events that would end in the death of Mary and Joseph's son.

The Magi continued their journey, found the crèche at Bethlehem, and offered Jesus symbolic gifts. They knelt before the King of the universe and offered him gold from their hearts. They proclaimed him God and Lord by the rising incense of their prayers. The Magi acclaimed the One who would rise from the dead with their gift of myrrh that symbolized fulfilled hopes.

WORKING ON PATIENTS

Heavenly Father, help us remember that the person who cut us off in traffic last night is a single mother who worked nine hours that day and is rushing home to cook dinner, help with homework, do the laundry and spend a few precious moments with her children.

Help us to remember that the pierced, tattooed, disinterested young man who can't make change correctly is a worried 19-year-old college student, balancing his apprehension over final exams with his fear of not getting his student loans for next semester.

Remind us, Lord, that the scary looking bum, begging for money in the same spot every day (who really ought to get a job!) is a slave to addictions that we can only imagine in our worst nightmares. Help us to remember that the old couple walking annoyingly slow through the store aisles and blocking our shopping progress are savoring this moment, knowing that, based on the biopsy report she got back last week, this will be the last year that they go shopping together.

Heavenly Father, remind us each day that, of all the gifts you give us, the greatest gift is love. It is not enough to share that love with those we hold dear. Open our hearts not to just those who are close to us, but to all humanity. Let us be slow to judge and quick to forgive, show patience, empathy and love

24 Things to Remember

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| Your presence is a present to the world. | The longer one carries a problem, the heavier it gets. |
| You're unique and one of a kind. | Don't take things too seriously. |
| Your life can be what you want it to be. | Live a life of serenity, not a life of regrets. |
| Take the days just one at a time. | Remember that a little love goes a long way... |
| Count your blessings, not your troubles. | Remember that a lot...goes forever. |
| You'll make it through whatever comes along. | Remember that friendship is a wise investment. |
| Within you are so many answers. | Life's treasures are people...together. |
| Understand, have courage, be strong. | Realize that it's never too late. |
| Don't put limits on yourself. | Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way. |
| So many dreams are waiting to be realized. | Have health and hope and happiness. |
| Decisions are too important to leave to chance. | Take time to wish upon a star. |
| Reach for your peak, your goal, your prize. | And don't ever forget...for even a day... |
| Nothing wastes more energy than worrying. | How very special you are. |

DON'T MISS THE POINT!

Once upon a time there lived in Bethlehem a woman named Babushka. She kept the cleanest and neatest house in town and was also the best cook. She heard rumors of three kings coming across the desert but paid no attention to them because she had so much work to do. Then she heard the sounds of drums and pipes and a cavalcade of riders. She looked out the window and there were three richly dressed kings coming towards her house. They told her that they had come to honor the little prince who had been born in Bethlehem and they needed food and lodging. Babushka cooked a wonderful meal for them, remade all the beds, and wore herself out. The next morning the kings begged her to come with them so she too might see the little prince. Babushka said she would follow after them as soon as she finished the dishes. She cleaned the house again and then took out of a cabinet the toys of her own little prince who had died so long ago. She had no more need of them and would give them to the new little prince. She put them in a basket and sat down for a moment's rest before she followed the wise men. Hours later she woke up, grabbed the basket, and rushed into town. But the kings were gone and so were the little prince and his parents. Ever after, it is said, Babushka has followed after them. Whenever she finds a new born babe, she looks to see if he is the little prince. Even if he (or in our days she too) is not there, Babushka leaves a toy for the child. I think she probably found the prince early on, but we still should learn from her lesson: we should never let the important interfere with the essential.

Mary's Favorite Tool

Mary knows that it is hard to keep the clutter out of our hearts. We tend to get distracted by life's hustle and bustle, by the shiny things of the world, even though they aren't the most important things. She knows we need help learning how to reflect deeply on God's action in our lives, and she has given us that help. She has given us a tool for developing our interior life that has a 100% success rate. Everyone who has used this tool has come closer to God and grown in wisdom, courage, and joy. This tool was given by Mary in a vision to St Dominic in the thirteenth century. Since then it has been used successfully by illiterate peasants and cultured queens, popes and bishops, mothers and widows, sailors and soldiers. All of us know about it, but not enough of us use it. It's called the Rosary. The Rosary is a key letting us into Mary's heart, where we can sit with her, as if we were having a cup of tea together in her parlor, just the two of us. We sit and talk things over, letting Christ's light shine on the dark, cold corners of our mind and heart, and letting his grace heal and strengthen all that is wounded and weak in our lives and in the world. Our culture has a tradition of making a New Year's Resolution. Why not make the resolution to spend this year learning from our spiritual mother how to let God put order, peace, and wisdom into our lives, by "keeping all these things and reflecting on them in our hearts" through the Rosary. If we take even that small step closer to Christ, he will surely take a giant leap closer to us.

Joy to the world, the Lord has come!

The angel reassured the shepherds that the birth of Jesus, our Saviour, means, "great joy for all the people" (Luke 2.10). Canadians will celebrate with joy the Sesquicentennial of Confederation next year—150 Years of Canada! We rejoice at the foundations laid by our forebears—our clergy, religious, and lay people—who have built our wonderful Catholic legacy of churches, institutions, and service. We rejoice that, from earliest days, the Church of Alexandria-Cornwall has cared for the orphan, the widow, and the stranger. In joy, Christians see Christ in the marginalized, the captive, and the elderly. Pope Francis advocates joy, notably in his encyclical "The Joy of the Gospel" (*Evangelii gaudium*) and his exhortation "The Gladness of Love" (*Amoris laetitia*). The pope calls us to renew our encounter with Jesus. Joy will then flow into our encounters with others at home, at work, and in society generally. We will be "missionary disciples" to the lost, suffering, and broken people in our diocese. Spontaneously, we rejoice at the sight of a newborn child. Each baby demonstrates God's creativity and goodness. How much more joyful is it to contemplate the birth of Jesus Christ! Through it, God shines the light of his love into the darkness of the world. The true joy of Christmas is the gift of eternal life Jesus has given us through his Cross and Resurrection. We celebrate this miraculous event begun on a dark winter's night two thousand years ago. Mary and Joseph experienced the joy and the challenges of family life with the birth of Jesus in humble circumstances. Love and wonderment met in this tiny child. Today, we also meet Christ in our family. In times, joyful or difficult, he is brought to birth in our homes and hearts. This Christmas, may the example and intercession of the Holy Family—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—enrich your family with the gifts of peace, mercy, and joy!

Merry Christmas!

✠ Terrence Prendergast, S.J.
Apostolic Administrator