

REDEMPTORISTS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



LETTER FROM INUVIK

Dear Confreres, Associates, Family and Friends:

Today I saw a glimpse of the sun for the first time since the beginning of December. While winter is far from over, this little glow brings hope that longer days and the warmth of spring will come again.

The little town of Inuvik began a community choir to be a part of the annual Christmas concert which is held at the Igloo church each year. What a gathering of talent that was. From elementary school classes to Filipino choirs to solo acts composing and singing their own songs it was a marvelous night full of the spirit of the season. One thing that touched my heart is that the message was explicitly spiritual with many of the groups taking time to talk about the meaning of Christmas as the gift of God's Son to the world, and the church was filled to capacity to hear it.

The churches in Inuvik and in the missions were decorated inside and out. Being my first Christmas in Inuvik, it was daunting to dig into the attic and try to figure out what cardboard boxes full of decorations needed to be carted downstairs and which of the half dozen mix and matched manger scenes would be most appropriate for in front of the altar. Luckily, many parishioners came to my aid and we had it taken care of without much fuss. One contribution that I made was standing a plywood cut-out of the Nativity in the yard in front of the church under the branches of a beautiful snow covered spruce tree.

In Paulatuk, I enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of Hank and Marlene Wolki who hosted me in their home for the week. Hank, in particular, went out of his way to make me feel at home by cooking up a very special meal of Caribou Head, which is exactly what it sounds like, a whole head from a Caribou chopped up, boiled and served on a platter. Mmm... Mmm... good. If anyone wants to see pictures, let me know, but I

won't add them here in case some of you are squeamish. Another first experience in Paulatuk was the powerful winds of a winter storm. What I thought was an extreme 90km/h wind in -25C turned out to be not much of a blow from the perspective of the local people. I, on the other hand, was amazed at the ferocity as I sat inside and felt the house vibrate with each wind gust. Not feeling close enough to the action, I dressed up and went out for a walk in the -50C wind-chill. The drifting snow on the bay left behind drifts with the consistency of cinder blocks. As I walked across these newly-formed dunes, I did not even leave a footprint on the grainy surface and one could easily see how the snow houses used by hunting parties in the not so distant past could be constructed from the blocks sawn out of these well-compacted mounds.

With the arrival of Christmas, I knew that I would need help to ensure that Eucharist was offered in as many of the missions as possible. Fr. Tom O'Rourke, a Redemptorist priest and formation director for the Redemptorists in Canada, came to Inuvik to help out which freed me to travel to Paulatuk over Christmas. Fr. Tom was warmly welcomed by the people of Inuvik as well as Tsiigehtchic where he drove out for midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. Fr. Tom mentioned that he was moved by the full Church in Tsiigehtchic especially since it had been so long since they last had a Midnight Mass. Tom jumped right in and savoured the Northern experience reveling in the darkness and the -40C temperatures. On the last day of his visit North as he headed to the airport for the flight home, he was offered one last experience of a dog sled trip. After a quick orientation Tom took charge of his sled without realizing that the dogs only have two speeds, stop and fast. As they took off Tom let go a scream as the excitement of the moment took over. Given Fr. Tom's enthused response, I think it won't be long before we see him back here again.

As I bring my reflections to a close for this letter I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of those who were so generous with their financial contributions to the parish over the Christmas season. In all, close to \$8500 arrived and each gift was deeply appreciated as it helped to relieve the financial strain and allowed us to focus on the joy of this season. More than money, we truly appreciate your prayerful support of our little community. We face many obstacles as we strive to make our parish thrive. It is so good to know that we are not alone and that we are part of this great family, brothers and sisters in Christ. Happy New Year to you all.

Fr. Jon Hansen, C.Ss.R

PARISH DIRECTORY

Parish Council
Lauri Ann Fenlon
lauri.ann.fenlon@gmail.com
Finance Council
Steve Fleck
stevefleck@shaw.ca
Parish Education Committee
Renee Stafford
pec@olphbc.ca

COORDINATORS

Altar Guild
Bridget Bird 604-228-9180
Altar Servers
Kate Carr 604-730-5640
Catholic Women's League
Jutta Zeisler 604-224-4081
Children's Liturgy
Rosanna Falbo 604-253-1412
Craft Group
Doris Rankin 604-224-0876
Development & Peace
William Wingson 778-866-8504
Eucharistic Ministry
Pamela Brammall 604-228-9206

Food Bank
Robyn Sirmul
robynsirmul@shaw.ca
Hospitality Ministry
Gerry Macken 604-222-1369
Library
Katherine Hill
kathswim2012@gmail.com
Liturgy of the Hours
Bridget Clark 604-228-8773
Madonna Group
Monica Cheung 604-739-8837
Ministry of the Word
Roger Poirier 604-224-0426

Music Ministry
Catherine Walsh
Catherine.organist@gmail.com
Pastoral Care
Mary Thompson 604-263-6008
PREP
Elizabeth Towers 604-440-8809
Project Advance
Dimitri Nikolitsas 604-809-8477
RCIA
Bertilla Watanabe 604-224-4344
Social Justice/St. Vincent de Paul
Mark Thompson 604-263-6008
Weddings
Fr Babu Mathew
604-224-4344



REDEMPTORISTS

2465 CROWN STREET
VANCOUVER
B.C. V6R3V9
ESTABLISHED 1923

MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor
Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.
Associate Pastor
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.
Office Manager
Virginia Fong
Pastoral Coordinator
Bertilla Watanabe
Bookkeeper
Corinna Siy
OLPH School Principal
Lora Clarke

IN RESIDENCE

Brendan Boland, C.Ss.R.
William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

CONTACT

Email: parish.olph@rcav.org
Website: www.olphchurch.ca
Parish Office: 604-224-4344
OLPH School: 604-228-8811
Jr. Kindergarten: 604-221-0002



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

February 7, 2016

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners,

It feels good to be back. My time away, visiting with family and friends, was refreshing and invigorating. Not only was I able to see my parents, siblings and nephews and nieces, it just helped me to appreciate the simple pleasures of a home-cooked meal literally cooked at home! However, my heart and mind was never far from my OLPH home as I still responded to email messages from the office.

One of the things which I kept updates on was the situation on parents at the school and whether they received the subsidized tuition rates. Although the Mass attendance rate among school parents leaves much to be desired, I think parents are beginning to understand that there are certain responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with having your children in a Catholic school. You have heard time and again that parents are the first educators of their children in the Catholic faith. That education must include the first of the ten commandments.

Perhaps a review of the first three of those commandments might be appreciated by some.

1. *I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange Gods before me.*
Among the strange Gods people place before the Lord these days are hockey and soccer. Sports and recreation are so important for the health and well-being of our children but let us look at how we can work with busy family schedules and keep things in perspective.

2. *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.*
This is another one people struggle with - the use of OMG is rampant. Let's think twice before bandying about the name of God loosely. It is a huge challenge for all of us but we do need to reflect our counter-cultural nature in gentle ways.

3. *Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.*
Like the first point, keeping the Lord's day holy means giving priority to being present to the Lord at Mass. Parents need to show this by example. If you are visiting someone or going away for the weekend, take the opportunity to visit a church in the neighbourhood you are going to. The website of the Archdiocese of Vancouver has a very handy Mass-finder feature that lists parishes and Mass times. If you are going further away, include a trip to a Catholic church for Mass as part of your spiritual and cultural itinerary.

As we prepare for Lent in this Year of Mercy, I look forward to seeing all of you at Mass every weekend. May our blessed Mother help us to stay close to our Lord.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R

Before the Angels I sing your praise, O Lord - Psalm 137

NEWS & NOTICES

Thank You For Your Support: Over Christmas our parish made a donation to the Redemptorists of Our Lady of Victory Parish affectionately called the Igloo church, in the western Arctic. In his message of thanks, pastor of the parish, Fr. Jon Hansen writes, “Your donation over the Christmas season has helped to put a large dent in our heating bill and allowed us to focus on the joy of the season. We are overwhelmed by the generous response to our Christmas wish letter and thank you from the bottom of our hearts.” As we are highlighting the outstanding work of Redemptorists elsewhere this Jubilee year, read Fr. Jon Hansen’s spirited account of his first Christmas in Inuvik on the back page.

Family Mass: This is a special Mass led by children to be held once a month. The first one will be on Sunday Feb 21 at 9am. Families with young children are warmly invited to join us. Refreshments will be served after Mass. Donations of snacks would be appreciated! Please contact Heather Sage for more info. Email: hleachsage@gmail.com.

Reconciliation Service: Grade 2 children will be receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time on Sat 10am Feb 13 for Grade 2. Keep our little ones in your prayers!

Ash Wednesday Masses: Lent is a time of prayer, reflection and fasting in preparation for Easter. It begins with Ash Wednesday on Feb 10. Mass and distribution of ashes: 8am, 9am (School Mass) and 7pm.

Holidays: Monday Feb 8 is a family day. Mass is at 9am. Also a happy and prosperous Lunar New Year and blessed gatherings with family and friends to all who parishioners who celebrate this festival.

Host Families Needed: Eleven young adults from NET (National Evangelization Team) are facilitating a Confirmation Retreat for Grade 7 students. We are looking for several families to host two to three members each for two nights Tuesday March 1 & Wed March 2. If you are able to host, please call the school office at 604-228-8811 for details.

2016 Envelope Boxes: The 2016 donation envelope boxes are now in the Parish office. If you have not picked yours up yet, please come by the office during the week Mon-Fri 9am-4pm. For the sake of accurate records and receipts, please do not use envelopes from previous years.

ONE Conference 2016 - In the Father’s Mercy: The Church’s mission is to make disciples of us all and you’re invited. Hear inspirational messages from world class speakers: Angèle Regnier, Ken Yasinski and Gwendoline Allison, with an opportunity to visit local ministries and exhibits. Saturday, March 5, from 9-5:30pm at the Vancouver Convention Centre. This event has sold out the past three years. Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased online at rcav.org/one or at any parish.

DECEMBER/JANUARY COLLECTIONS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Regular Envelopes for the month of January	\$43,541.70
Initial Offering	\$2,231.00
Christmas Collection	\$14,291.15
Solemnity of Mary (New Year’s Day)	\$2,297.25
Food Bank	\$619.10
Offering for the Needy	\$1,922.00

Stewardship Reflection

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?’ ‘Here I am,’ I said, ‘send me!’” (Isaiah 6:8)

Every day – in little ways and in big ways – God asks, “Whom shall I send?” Whether it is someone to take on a new ministry or just someone to open a door for a stranger, God constantly provides doors of opportunity. The next time you hear God calling, have the courage to walk through the door and say “Here I am, Lord.”

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St Louis

JUBILEE CALENDAR

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Door Is Open

Thank you to all the Door Is Open volunteers who made Tuesday’s outreach work at the downtown Eastside a tremendous success. The next one is on Tuesday April 5.

Lent Preparation

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday this week Feb 10. Ash Wednesday is a day of prayer and fasting. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. It is a reminder of our need to turn to God in humility and repentance for our sins.

Rites of Acceptance & Election

Our RCIA inquirers and candidates will be taking an important step towards formalizing their entry into the Catholic faith. If all of them are ready, we will have nine people receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Communion and Confirmation and another six for Eucharist and Confirmation. We urge you all to keep them in their prayers.

Blessing of Marriages

Married couples will be blessed at all Masses on Feb 14 Valentine’s Day. Cake and coffee will be served after the 11am Mass.

MARCH EVENTS

Parish Mission: In the Desert with Jesus

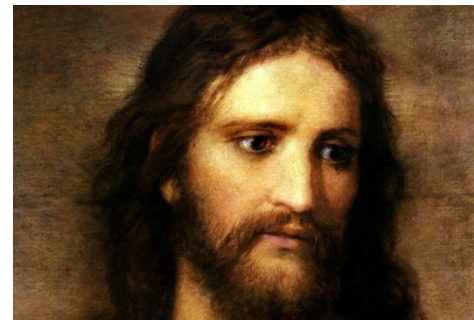
Mark your calendar for the Parish Mission starting on Sunday evening March 13-16 led by Fr. Eugene “Red” O’Reilly. Fr. Red was born in Ireland, came to Canada with his family and later joined the Redemptorists. He is known for his teaching on joy and compassion, his touching stories and his humour.

He is also known for his music which was developed mainly in support of his parish mission preaching work. Some of his pieces, such as The Prodigal Son, Children of the Light and Woman of Mystery are well-known and well-loved across the country and around the world.

Do You Reveal Jesus When People See You?

By Deacon Michael Bickerstaff

In John 14:15, Jesus tells his apostles, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” In this passage, Jesus is preparing His Apostles for His departure and the coming of the Holy Spirit. After three long years with them, these are among His final words of instruction. These words must be important. Again, He tells them that if they love Him, they will keep His commandments. Earlier in His public ministry Jesus told a scribe that the greatest of the commandments is that we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and that the second is that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Now we would think that the Apostles understood this. They loved Jesus, they were trying to live good and holy lives. Yet He knew they still needed to learn to love as He does and so do we.



Jesus makes it very simple... for them and for us, “love one another as I have loved you.”

Do we love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength? Do we love one another as Jesus loves us? If we say that we love Jesus, we have to take seriously these words of His. We must be people of love. Some of you might be thinking, “Oh no, not another article on love! Right?” But we have to listen to Jesus... He deems it essential that His Apostles get this right... and so must we, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you... love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:9,12).

People of Love

If we are going to be His disciples... if we are going to say that we love Jesus... **we must be people of love!** So how do we love Him and love one another? Those who know me have heard me frequently ask, “What is your most important task on earth? What is the meaning of my life?” The Catechism teaches us we are to know, love and serve God in this life so as to be with Him forever in the life to come. The most important thing we do is to attain heaven and to be the instruments by which others attain heaven. This is the supernatural end that our God wills for us. We serve God by serving others... by being Christ to them. But notice that service flows from our knowing and loving God. We cannot love others, with the love of Christ, unless we first love Him. It is our love for Him that must motivate our love of neighbor. Notice also that loving God comes from knowing Him. We cannot fully love God, if we do not know Him. And we cannot know Him, if we do not spend time with Him, each day in prayer. Our good works, to be effective toward our spiritual end, must flow from an ever-deepening love of God in our very souls.

Excerpt: *The Integrated Catholic Life*

Ministry Focus: Helping at funerals



A funeral reception is not just hospitality, it is a work of mercy.

Putting on a funeral reception for a parishioner who has passed has become time-honoured tradition at our parish which was started and carries on, thanks to the dedication of the Catholic Women’s League. It calls upon the resources and dedication of members often at very short notice.

Sometimes a family simply hires their own caterer for the reception. More frequently, the CWL is asked to do a full or partial catering of the event. For a full reception, the CWL provides the sandwiches, sweets, flowers, tea, coffee, juice, pickles, napkins and any other items deemed necessary. In a partial catering, the food is ordered by the family and the CWL assists in setting up the hall, serving and cleaning up.

If the numbers expected are small enough for a sit-down affair, round tables are set up with tablecloths. For bigger groups, long tables with some seating for immediate family and the elderly is provided. After the event, the ladies clean up, take the tablecloths home for washing and pressing to make sure things are ready for the next event.

CWL Funeral Receptions Coordinator Diane Poirier, “We do not charge but our work is funded by the funds of the CWL and the generosity of our individual members. We hope people appreciate that the costs and time spent are considerable. Our numbers are also decreasing so members of the Parish at large are very welcome to come, donate food, help with set-up, as well as clean-up.

“I have been heading this Ministry since 1993, that’s 23 years, and I can honestly say that I have met and worked with the most amazing women who give of themselves and rarely say no when asked to help. As one lady said to me one time, ‘Diane, we’re all headed in the same direction.’ How true. We all hope that someone will be there when our time comes.”

Helping out at a funeral is one of the works of mercy we should all consider lending a hand to. The women of the CWL bring a warmth, compassion and joy to their dedication which keeps this apostolic service in much demand. However, help is needed from non-members too if the parish is to continue providing this service. If you are not a member but would like to be involved in this very worthwhile ministry, you are most welcome to contact Diane at 604-224-0426.