

Parish of Saint Leonard

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Our Pastoral Centre is presently located at 553 George Street, New Waterford, NS B1H 4E4.

OFFICE HOURS - MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS - 9:30 AM - 12 NOON & 1:30 PM TO 4:00 PM

Volume 2, Number 16

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2008

Reading I: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11 (The Spirit Is Upon Me)
Reading II: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (Pray Without Ceasing)
Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28 (The One to Come)

We Remember... Our celebrations of Christian Burial ... We pray for those who have died, especially *Raymond Bennett, Pearl Irene MacKay Delaney, Helen (MacArthur) Hall and James A. 'Mick' McNeil.*

We Celebrate ... Our Sunday Gatherings for Eucharist

| Saturday (Vigils) | | Sunday | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 4:00 PM | St. Agnes | 8:30 AM | St. Joseph (Lingan) |
| 5:30 PM | St. Joseph (New Victoria) | 10:00 AM | Mount Carmel |
| | | 11:30 AM | St. Michael's |



Our Daily Gatherings This Week

All weekday celebrations take place at **St. Michael's Church**, unless otherwise noted.

| | | |
|-----------|----------|--|
| Monday | 11:00 AM | Funeral Liturgy at Mount Carmel Church |
| | 6:30 PM | Liturgy of the Hours |
| Tuesday | 9:00 AM | Eucharist |
| | 6:30 PM | Parish Advent Gathering (Gaul Centre) |
| Wednesday | 6:30 PM | Eucharist |
| Thursday | 6:30 PM | Eucharist |
| Friday | 9:00 AM | Eucharist |

***Please note:** In the case of a funeral in our parish or a school cancellation, daily mass (morning or evening) and exposition are cancelled. Parishioners who celebrate daily Mass are invited to join us in supporting families in their loss through the funeral rites when possible. This is a great opportunity to be a visible sign of the Body of Christ.

Sacrament of Baptism

Celebrations of baptism take place on the third Sunday of each month at St. Michael's Church. If you would like to have your child baptized, please contact the Pastoral Centre at 862-2255.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Before Evening Masses (Wednesday & Thursday), or by appointment.

Sacrament of Marriage

If you wish to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage, please contact the Pastoral Centre at least 6 months in advance.

We Believe ... John the Baptist announces to the people that they have seen the Messiah, but they do not recognize him. We hear about this in today's Gospel. John's message is important to us today as well. Jesus is among us now. He is in the people we know, in those we don't know and even in those we don't like. He is in the stranger who needs our welcome, in the poor person who needs our kindness, in those who need food and shelter, in the lonely person who needs friendship, in the sick and the dying, and in the outcast who needs our respect and acceptance. When we recognize Jesus in these people, we truly are followers of Christ. In faith, during Advent and throughout the entire year, we recognize Jesus in others and we offer our care, kindness and welcome.



Questions of the Week

- Adults:** Where in my life can I identify habits and attitudes which twist and cover God's love? What concrete steps can I take to remove them?
- Children:** How can I more clearly show my love for God, my family, and my friends?

Parish Activities

Christmas Children's Day



Attention parents/caregivers: Expecting to have some last minute things to do, come December 20th? Have young children around that make doing these things difficult? Well, the youth of our parish and the BEC Interact Club have a solution for you! **Between the hours of 11:00 AM and 4:00 PM on Saturday, December 20th, parents/caregivers are invited to drop off their children, ages 3-11, at the Gaul Centre** while they do their last minute shopping, wrapping, baking, etc. Children will be treated to a day full of Christmas-related activities by the teens of our community. There is no fee for this day, but families are encouraged to bring along an item for our local food bank. To register your child/children, visit the Parish of Saint Leonard website at www.parihofsaingleonard.com and find the link to the online registration form under the "Highlights" section. Alternatively, you can pick up a registration form at the Pastoral Centre. Our youth would greatly appreciate any donations of festive snacks for the children from parishioners. For more information, contact Melissa at 862-7231 or melissacaume@hotmail.com.

Advent/Christmas Celebration

As the season of Advent draws to a close, why not take a break from the hustle and bustle of preparing for the holidays? Come join with other members of our community for an hour of activities celebrating the beauty of Advent and the spirit of the upcoming Christmas season. On **Tuesday, December 16th, at 6:30 PM at the Gaul Centre**, parishioners of all ages are invited to come together to celebrate this wonderful time in our Church Year. Any donations of baked goods to this evening would be very much appreciated.



You Could Win A Christmas Basket!!



Our Ways & Means Committee is selling tickets (\$1) on a Christmas Basket (Drawing Dec. 21). For tickets, call the Pastoral Centre (862-2255) or Valerie (862-3555).

Attention C.W.L. Members

All CWL Members are reminded that the **Annual Dues (\$13)** should be submitted by December 31, 2008. You may place them in a plain envelope (clearly marked "CWL") and drop them in the Sunday Collection. Thanks!

Christmas Mass Schedule

Copies of the Christmas Mass Schedule are available at the entrances of our churches. Please take one home for reference over the holidays!! And remember ... you can check our website at any time for up-to-the minute schedules!!

www.parihofsaingleonard.com

Youth Activities

Rather than a gathered Youth Night next weekend, our young people are encouraged to help out with the **Christmas Children's Day on December 20**. If you are able to help, please complete the online form found on our parish website. You are also invited to help set up for this event (including making gingerbread people on **Friday, December 19, at 7 PM at the Gaul Centre**).



Christmas Eve Youth Choir



We are attempting to put together a Youth Choir for the **4:30 PM Mass at Mount Carmel on Christmas Eve**. If you are interested in being a part of this choir, please complete the online form in the "Youth Corner" section of our website, or call the Pastoral Centre at 862-2255.

Confirmation Preparation

Confirmation Candidates are reminded to complete their **online activity** for the month of December. If you have yet to complete the previous months' activities, they are still posted on the website. All online activities are under the "Youth Corner" section of our website.



Cancellation Policy

In the event of weather-related school closures, any parish programs involving children and youth will be cancelled. With respect to weekend activities, please stay tuned to the local radio, or check our website for cancellations!

Advent Reconciliation

For those who wish to make Sacramental Reconciliation part of their preparation for Christmas, Individual Confession will take place at **St. Anne's Church, Glace Bay, on Saturday, December 20, from 10:00 AM-12 Noon and 2:00-4:00 PM**.

Combined Christmas Giving ...

There is Still Time To Help!

Thank you for your generous donations of hats, caps, socks and mittens which were placed on our giving trees during Advent. Thanks, also, for your donations to the Combined Christmas Giving Collections, and for your many gifts of toys and clothing, as well as non-perishable food items. These gifts will be passed along for distribution in our community. The combined effort of all the area Churches and organizations is helping to make this a good and holy Christmas for all families. We commend all who have been working tirelessly to make this project a success and we thank you for your generosity in assisting them!! If you have not yet contributed and would still like to do so, just drop your donation in the collection basket ... we will be happy to send it along to the Committee.



Tending The Flock

Supporting Ourselves as Parish

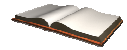
Sunday Collection for November 23, 2008

Envelopes (478): \$6,138.25 + Loose: \$479.44 = \$6,617.69.

Thank-you for your continued support!

Hymn Book Donation

A Hymn Book has been donated to the Parish of Saint Leonard In Memory Of Laura Merritt by the Merritt Family. Thank you for your generosity!



2009 Church Envelopes

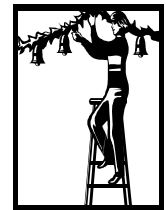
Contribution Envelopes for Parish Support in 2009 will be distributed over the next week. If you are a regular envelope user and have not received your envelopes by the end of this week, please call the Pastoral Centre (862-2255). If you are not presently using envelopes, but would like to start, simply pick up a box over the holidays in any church site. If you wish to support the parish through pre-authorized debit, please contact the Pastoral Centre. Thank you for your generous support.



Church Decorating

Our church buildings are prepared for feasts through the generosity of many volunteers and benefactors. Preparing a church for Christmas is among the most special celebration activities. Decorating will take place at the following times. Please feel free to come to any or all of the decorating sessions to lend a hand. Everyone is welcome!

| Church | Day | Date | Time |
|-----------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| St. Agnes | Saturday | December 20 | 5:00 PM |
| St. Joseph (L) | Sunday | December 21 | 9:30 AM |
| Mount Carmel | Sunday | December 21 | 1:00 PM |
| St. Michael | Sunday | December 21 | 3:30 PM |
| St. Joseph (NV) | Sunday | December 21 | 1:00 PM |



Upcoming Meetings

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|----|------|----|-----------------|
| Pastoral Council Meeting | Wednesday | December | 17 | 7:00 | PM | Pastoral Centre |
| Liturgy Committee Meeting | Thursday | January | 15 | 7:00 | PM | Gaul Centre |
| Finance Committee Meeting | Thursday | January | 22 | 7:00 | PM | Pastoral Centre |

Update on Parish Finances

Having received some positive feedback about the helpfulness of the demographic piece that was in the bulletin a number of weeks ago, we thought that it was timely to offer you another financial update. Many of you will recall that, in October, we shared information with parishioners that the financial position of the parish was very concerning. Unfortunately, since that time the situation has worsened. The revenue that we have brought in so far this year continues to fall short of what is needed. When considering the ordinary operation of the parish, the \$436,111 in revenue (January 1 to December 8) falls short of being able to cover the \$514,378 in expenses. **Our shortfall is currently \$78,267.** We encourage all parishioners to reflect on the above information as it pertains to our present situation and the decisions that confront us as we continue to live our mission.

Steering Group Update

The mandate of the Steering Group is to:

- Complete the further work outlined in the *Cherishing the Past, Embracing the Future* document;
- Remain open to considering any and all options that are identified along the way; and
- Report its findings back to the Pastoral Council.



Pastoral Council subsequently expanded the mandate of the Steering Group by requesting that it explore suggestions put forward in the *Considerations* document. We are pleased to report that the Steering Group work remains on track. The final step of the Steering Group's work will be to present its report to Pastoral Council. We expect to be in the position to report to Pastoral Council by mid-February. As always, the work of the Steering Group is guided by the mission of the Church and that of our local parish - ***"to be a visible sign of the Body of Christ in our welcome, witness, and celebration of all that we are as people of God."***

St. Vincent De Paul Society



◆ **Emergency Food Service** - Call 862-3779 or 862-3770

◆ **Clothing Room** - Behind St. Michael's Church (on Christy Lane) – Mondays at 10 AM for drop-offs and Mondays from 11 AM - 3 PM for pickups.

◆ **Good, Used Furniture Needed** – Please Phone Dan MacMullin at 862-8832



Diocesan & Community Events

● **Experience A Burke Family Christmas - Sat., Dec. 13, at 8 PM.**

The Burke Family will combine the music of their ECMA winning Christmas CD and their newly released CD, to give audiences a seasonal evening like no other...but the music is just the beginning. Tickets (\$20) available at the Savoy Box Office (842-1577), Centre 200 Box Office (564-6668) or on-line at www.savoytheatre.com

● **Knights of Columbus** – The Regular Meeting will take place on **Sunday, December 14, at 8 PM** in the KOC Rooms. The Executive will meet at 7:15 PM.

● **Share the Warmth** – Family Service of Eastern NS has initiated a program to assist people facing high heating costs this winter. Donations of new or gently used blankets and bedding will be accepted at any Family Service Office or local Credit Union **until December 19**. Your support is appreciated. For info, call 849-4772.

● **Holy Land Tour – February 18-27, 2009** -- \$2399 includes air from Hfx., accommodations, two meals per day, guide and tours. Call Linda Randall 902-648-0050 or email tojesusthroughmary@gmail.com

● **Passion Play and European Tour – September 10, 2010** – an 18 day tour Featuring the world famous Passion Play in Oberammergau, which is performed every ten years, fulfilling a promise made to God 375 years ago. For info, call 562-0676.

● **Marriage Preparation** – For all engaged couples.

1. **January 9, 10 & 11** – Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall, Sydney
2. **February 21, 22 & 23** – St. Leo's Parish, Glace Bay
3. **March 13, 14 & 15** – Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall, Sydney
4. **March 27, 28 & 29** – Bras d'Or Hall.
5. **June 12, 13 & 14** – Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall, Sydney
Pre-Registration required (\$60/couple). Call 539-6868, Ext. 2

● **Alcoholics Anonymous** is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership. They are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Their primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. The New Waterford Group of AA meets at their rooms on Ling Street on Mondays at 10:30 AM, Wednesdays at 8 PM; Fridays at 10:30 AM and Saturdays at 8 PM.

● **Holy Land Pilgrimage** – Follow in Christ's footsteps on a journey to sacred sites in Israel for 13 days in **February 2009**. Spiritual director is Father John Mills. Call 902-434-5554.

Dear Parishioners,

As God's Advent people, we meet the radical and prophetic John the Baptist once again this weekend in our liturgy. This time however, from the Gospel of John the Evangelist, we are presented the mission of the Baptist, 'to point to the Light' and his great humility 'I am not worthy to undo the thong of His (Jesus') sandals'. As we approach Christmas, may we be inspired by John to become more humble children of God and better signposts pointing to the Way, Truth and Life as convincingly as the Baptizer.

Peace and prayers, **Fr. Paul**



P.S. As noted in our update from Steering Group included in this week's bulletin, these recommendations and findings will be offered to Pastoral Council once they are completed around the middle of February. **After receiving this report, Pastoral Council will, in turn, offer it to all of our people for reflection, reaction and input. Then a gathering (or gatherings) will take place with the entire parish for discussion and input.** Thank you for your patience, faithfulness and understanding of our parish process during this very important time of discernment.

P.P.S. As was mentioned in October, from January 1, 2009, until the end of the heating season, St. Michael's Church and St. Joseph's Church, Lingan will be used for all of our liturgies including funerals. The mass times will be as follows:

| <i>Saturday (Vigils)</i> | | <i>Sunday</i> | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| 4:00 PM | St. Michael's | 8:30 AM | St. Joseph's, Lingan (barrier free access) |
| 5:30 PM | St. Michael's | 10:00 AM | St. Michael's |
| | | 11:30 AM | St. Michael's |