

The Disciples' Christmas...



The celebration of New Year commemorates many realities. It's a day consecrated to peace in the world, a day of blessings and good wishes. It celebrates Jesus, Prince of Peace, and Mary, God's Mother, who accepted God's request. It is also the feast that commemorates God's adoption of us as his children. This abundant *menu of celebrations* feeds our lives as disciples.

These remembrances are many and varied. One way I appreciate this diversity is to think about the artisanal work of my grandmothers. Throughout the winter, they wove *catalognes*, or place mats, for their relatives. At the beginning of the process, their workspaces had piles of different tissues which they cut into long strips. Slowly and skillfully, they wove or stitched them into sturdy and attractive pieces of art. From what once looked like chaos, something useful ultimately emerged. At the beginning of a new fiscal year, with the blessings of the New Year's Day Mass, this parable of weaving could describe the year that lies ahead. Viewing the many samples of tissues, it could be difficult to predict what the end product would look like, just like our hopes and wishes for the next twelve months.

New Year's Day is also the occasion when we examine our consciences and make heroic resolutions. In the night of December 31st, we set up our proposed "balance sheet" for the coming year. For the past several days, television and newspapers have provided us with reviews of the previous year. As not all news is good, we easily understand why Pope Paul VI insisted, during the 1960s, that the Mass on January 1st would have many prayers for peace. We hope for a healthy return on our efforts to protect our planet. Along with other positive components, we proclaim the essentials of our faith, the spiritual diversity of our Church, and the dynamics of a Christian daily life.

A week after the feast of Christmas, today's Gospel recounts the events that were proclaimed during Christmas night. While the Christmas crowds may not be present today, we are still among fellow disciples. The Mass celebrates Christ, the Prince of Peace, Mary his Mother, and recalls the shepherds' words. The New Year's Day celebration reminds us again that we are disciples, like Mary, whose life fulfills the ancient prophecies in the first reading (Numbers 6: 22-27). The second reading presents the meaning of Christmas. Our modern-day rituals of gift-giving and family gatherings may interfere with our full appreciation of the value of Christ's birth, our adoption by God. What an incredible gift!

The biblical proclamation of our adoption accompanies the most ancient commemoration of Mary. The first celebration of the year is consecrated to her and celebrates her maternity. This feast achieved its importance following the liturgical reform of Vatican II. The ancient feast of *Mary, Mother of God*, is not the only heritage shared by all Christians. Christ's circumcision has also been celebrated by Eastern Christians. Closer to our era, the insistence on the name *God saves, Jesus*, echoes the veneration of the holy name of Jesus, a tradition inherited from the period of the Reformation.

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Translated by Honore Kerwin Borrelli

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MASS INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY 1, 2017

Please pray for:

Lea Guilbeault & Ferruccio Berardo
Carmela Galardo
Patricia Berezuk
Pasqualina Ciarlillo
Leclerc-Benoit Families
Ada Bruscolini
Salvatore Cuccioli
Evangelina Luis

Requested by:

Family
Family
Heather & Denis
Family
Léo-Paul & Mary Leclerc
Wanda Di Fruscia
Wanda Di Fruscia
Luis Family

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

An annual ecumenical celebration traditionally held from January 18 to 25. By coming together during this week, we join with the people around the world to pray for Christian unity – in worship, reflection, study, and fellowship. This year, we rejoice in the opportunity to pray with the Christians of Germany. They have chosen as their theme “Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels Us,” inspired by 2 Corinthians 5:14-20. They invite Christians around the world to celebrate God’s reconciling grace, call us to recognize the pain of the deep divisions which afflict the Church, and urge us to become ambassadors of Christ’s message of reconciliation. Join us on Saturday, January 21, 2pm at St. John’s Lutheran Church (3594 Jeanne Mance St., Montreal). Contact the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism at 514-937-9176 or info@oikoumene.ca. Visit www.weekofprayer.ca

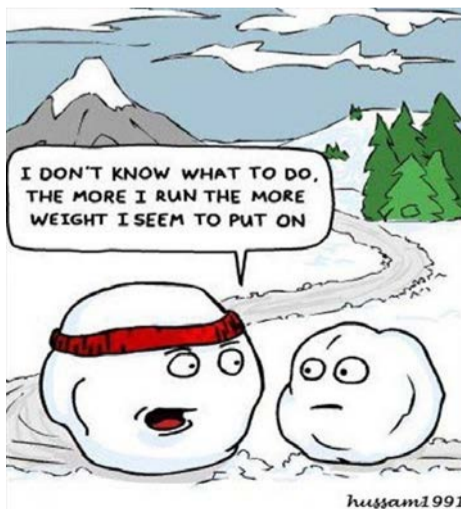
Please visit our new and improved web site at: <http://www.holyfamilyparishmtl.com>

Feel free to provide your comments / suggestions / or add to Joe Piazza at jpiazza@live.ca

If you wish to add your email address to Holy Family’s address list, please send it to jpiazza@live.ca

For those wishing to have a mass said for loved one or a friend, please see Sharon Murphy after mass.

The Christmas Collection was \$3800. Thank you!



HAPPY NEW YEAR! The new year begins, let us pray that it will be a year with peace, happiness and abundance of new friends, God bless us throughout the new year. Goodbye 2016 & Welcome to New Year 2017.