

Our Lady of Fatima

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 12

PARISH NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER, 2017

ST. THOMAS BECKET December 29

St. Thomas Becket was the archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of King Henry II. Once the king's great friend, his life and death have been immortalized in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. It was indeed, in the cathedral where St. Thomas died, the victim of King Henry's rage. When Thomas defied the king's wishes regarding the coronation of his son, Henry swore, "Who will free me from the troublesome priest?" Four servants of the king took the request literally and murdered St. Thomas as he was praying. For his part in the murder, King Henry performed public penance after St. Thomas's canonization.

St. Thomas Becket was a man of regular habits. Rising early to read the scriptures, he worked until early afternoon, when he regularly took a nap. Resting in the afternoon isn't a sign of sloth; it's often the best thing you can do. A brief catnap can refresh and restore you so you can think more clearly and work more efficiently. All too often, we ignore our bodies' signals. When our brain is sending the message, let me rest! We ignore it and give it just what it doesn't want—a jolt of caffeine. Then we wonder why we become jittery and crabby.

St. Thomas Becket paid attention to his physical needs. He got up early, but also rested in the afternoon. We need to do the same. After all, when you burn the candle at both ends, you're likely to end up with singed fingers.

What do I do to restore my spirits when I'm fatigued?

I LISTEN TO MY BODY'S MESSAGES.

~365 Saints—Woodeene Koenig-Bricker

Stewardship Prayer for December

Gracious Lord,
Let your goodness reveal itself to us, that we, made in your image, may conform ourselves to it. We cannot imagine your majesty, power and wonder on our own; nor is it fitting for us to try. But your kindness and mercy reach from the heavens, through the clouds, to the earth below to show us the fruits of your Incarnation.

You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of your eternal love. Caress us with your tiny hands; embrace us with your tiny arms, and soften our hearts with your tender voice so that we might respond as humble stewards of your active presence in the world. We pray this through Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Adapted from a prayer by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux ♦

HERITAGE DAY 2017

The parish's fourth annual Heritage Day was celebrated on Sunday, November 26, The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe at the 11:30 Mass. Members of the **Knights of Columbus** led the procession from the cafeteria to the church, which included the procession of flags representing the USA, the Vatican and 32 different countries. Our guest celebrant and homilist this year was **Monsignor John Gordon**, Pastor of The Most Holy Name of Jesus parish in Perth Amboy. He congratulated the Heritage Day Committee and all the volunteers who assisted in making the day one of great celebration. He stated "what brings us together today is more than what keeps us apart. Today is a very appropriate day to celebrate our cultures along with the Gospel of love and truth." He reflected on the readings for the Mass, emphasizing how through the "peace and grace that we receive from God, we are able to combine our one Catholic faith and our different cultures and together become missionary disciples." He encouraged all through our task of providing evangelization, to care for the needy and to share new life in faith to others. He stated that "we should value our unity first and foremost as God's children, His precious family, and always be joyful in sharing our different cultures."

A luncheon prepared and hosted by our parishioners followed the Mass. The parish family is grateful to the Heritage Day Committee, and all who volunteered their time, talents and resources during the Mass and luncheon to make Heritage Day a great success. God bless you.



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**The Newsletter will
be published monthly**



CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

The mystery of our salvation is to be honored during the Christmas Season, but not as something that happened two thousand years ago, rather as something present. While the act itself of Christ's birth and manifestation is past, its effects are present. The hidden reality in this mystery is Christ and His saving action. He is present in the mystery of Christmas-Epiphany, constantly interceding for us and communicating Himself in holy symbols.

After the time of waiting in Advent, we enjoy a fuller realization of Christ's presence among us. We should meditate on and celebrate the Christmas mystery as happening now to us and embrace its spiritual effects with an open heart. In the Word made flesh, we see that God is no stranger to the human condition; in the Infant born in a stable to simple working people. We come to understand that God Who is infinitely great is also one of us.

Christmas celebrates the Father's gift to us; the revelation of His loving presence. This knowledge has been given to us through Israel and the prophets and supremely through Christ His Son. It must continue to be made manifest through Christ, living in us.

Christmas is not just a commemoration of our Lord's birth, but the celebration of the great "Emmanuel" (God-is-with-us) mystery. God wants to share our human condition. At Christmas, Christians celebrate the dawn of God's light shining upon man, who goes through a valley of darkness.

The four Christmas Masses, the feast of the Holy Family, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, the Epiphany (Manifestation) of the Lord and His Baptism, show us how God revealed Himself in the Lord Jesus, in Whom He is really "Emanuel, God with us." In Jesus we see our God made visible and so are caught up in love of the God we cannot see.

~Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D. Divine Word Missionary-Treasury of Novenas

VOCATIONS

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LAY PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT

The American Bishops have said that **“The solution to the vocation shortage is their responsibility”**

One of the things they intend to do, is **“Build a Culture of Vocations in American Families”**

And they are asking lay people and lay organizations for help.

As Saint John Paul II said in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, **“Vocations is Everybody’s Business”**

St. Charles Borromeo Vocations Committee of Our Lady of Fatima Parish

MISSION STATEMENT: We, the members of the Vocations Committee dedicate ourselves in support, prayer and action to promote vocations within our parish and the Diocese of Metuchen. We pray especially for those being called to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life and consecrated virginity. We sponsor events for seminarians and for young adults to encourage them to consider becoming a priest, deacon, religious or consecrated virgin. We pray that they open their minds and hearts to His call and be encouraged by the people they love.

PRAYER ACTIVITIES:

We do a personal weekly Holy Hour for Vocations, (on the same day and hour of each week).

We sponsor a public monthly Holy Hour for Vocations, (on the First Friday of each month, from 7-8 p.m.)

We distribute Vocation Prayer Cards to the Homebound and to various groups of the parish

We promote *Vocation Awareness Week* (in the Parish)

We promote and participate in the *World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life* (Prayer Service at Cathedral)

We promote *World Day of Prayer for Vocations on Good Shepherd Sunday*

We promote *Priesthood Sunday*

AWARENESS ACTIVITIES:

We display Seminarian & Vocation Posters throughout the parish facilities

We distribute **Vision Magazine** to the young people of our parish

We distribute Vocation Awareness Literature

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES:

We participate and promote letter writing to those preparing for the priesthood and religious life

We adopt a seminarian (and remain in touch with the seminarian through ordination)

We adopt a priest

What are the qualifications to join our Parish Vocations Committee?

A desire to serve God and the parish family & a willingness to devote time, talent, and energy to help promote vocations.

Time Commitment: Meetings & special events.

Meeting Nights: Tuesdays generally every other month (as needed) @ 7:00 P.M. in the Parish Center

Subject to change, check bulletin) **Contact Person:** Pat Lorenc: 732-752-4479 Email: babci4@verizon.net

All men & women 18 and over are welcome!