

St. Leo The Great

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 Watford Street, Brooklin, ON L1M 1H2

905.655.3286 · Fax: 905.655.4519

www.stleothegreat.ca

e-mail: officeatstleothegreat@gmail.com

Pastor: Father Mounir El- Rassi

Parish Secretary: Gianella Lazaro 905-655-3286 ext. 1



The Nativity of the Lord

Hebrew 1:6.

“And again, when God brings His firstborn into the world, He says, “Let all God’s angels worship Him”.



MASS INTENTIONS
OF THE WEEK

Tuesday, December 27th

No mass

Wednesday, December 28th

7:00 p.m. † Guy Asselin

Staff of St. Leo the Great

Thursday, December 29th

8:30 a.m. In thanksgiving for all blessings required

Friday, December 30th

8:30 a.m. † Innocenzo & † Vincenzina

Mammone

† Attilio & † Maria Tuzi

† Romeo & † Marjorie Asselin

Saturday, December 31st

4:30 p.m. Pro populo

Sunday, January 1st

9:00 a.m. † All souls in purgatory

11:00 a.m. † Patrick Sullivan

On this week @ St. Leo The Great...

- Looking for a couch set
- Nativity Prayers of Saints
- Christmas at Greccio
- Christmas reflection



Looking for a couch set

We are looking for a couch set, second-hand/new, in good shape, for our lounge room. It is a good time to replace the old set in parish lounge room.

Nativity Prayers of Saints

St. Augustine



Let the just rejoice, for their justifier is born.

Let the sick and infirm rejoice, For their saviour is born. Let the captives rejoice, For their Redeemer is born. Let slaves rejoice, for their Master is born. Let free men rejoice, For their Liberator is born. Let All Christians rejoice, For Jesus Christ is born. Amen.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux



Let Your goodness Lord appear to us, that we made in your image, conform ourselves to it.

In our own strength we cannot imitate Your majesty, power, and wonder nor is it fitting for us to try. But Your mercy reaches from the heavens through the clouds to the earth below. You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of eternal love Caress us with Your tiny hands, embrace us with Your tiny arms and pierce our hearts with Your soft, sweet cries. Amen.



Christmas at Greccio

What better way to prepare for the arrival of the Christ Child than to take a brief journey to Greccio, the spot in central Italy where Saint Francis of Assisi created the first Christmas crib in the year 1223.

Francis, recalling a visit he had made years before to Bethlehem, resolved to create the manger he had seen there. The ideal spot was a cave in nearby Greccio. He would find a baby—we’re not sure if it was a live infant or the carved image of a baby—hay upon which to lay him, an ox and an ass to stand beside the manger. Word went out to the people of the town. At the appointed time,



they arrived carrying torches and candles.

One of the friars began celebrating Mass. Francis himself gave the sermon. His biographer, Thomas of Celano, recalls that Francis “stood before the manger...overcome with love and filled with a wonderful happiness...”

For Francis, the simple celebration was meant to recall the hardships Jesus suffered even as an infant, a savior who chose to become poor for our sake, a truly human Jesus. Tonight, as we pray around the Christmas cribs in our homes, we welcome into our hearts that same Savior.

Reflection

God’s choice to give human beings free will was from the beginning a decision to be helpless in human hands. With the birth of Jesus, God made the divine helplessness very clear to us, for a human infant is totally dependent on the loving response of other people. Our natural response to a baby is to open our arms as Francis did—to the infant of Bethlehem, and to the God who made us all.



Christmas reflection: please consider further reflections on these three points.

- i. Human’s life and its meaning as a Christian*
- ii. Made in God’s image and likeness*
- iii. God Emmanuel with us*

i. The child Jesus born to and living within the setting of a human family gives us a whole new understanding of family dynamics. He taught us how to love, to honour, to serve, and recognizing all that takes place amidst family as an instrument that sanctifies life. He cried like us, experienced the joy of the love of his family members, the joy of many blessings and the gift of life. Also, he experienced the suffering of separation and the sorrowful state of humanity. Jesus by his life taught us to love all as brothers and sisters, to honour God and his law and how to love people. He taught us how we all originate from God, many of us now are children of God through the gift of the Church, while some others are still waiting for the good news to be preached to them.

ii. By his incarnation Christ sheds a heavenly light and understanding in our human life. He has proved to us that a human life is precious, unique and each person unrepeatable, each person is a hidden mystery unfolding in their life through her/his accomplishments and vocation. The revelation of God making Adam in his image and likeness was a mystery hidden, for many millennials, only to be revealed by the birth of God’s only begotten Son. In a way God has proved to us in his Son that we are truly in his image and likeness. He took flesh and human life like us but without sin. The uniqueness (above all creation) God has given us is the eternal soul, the gift of self-consciousness, the gift of speech and the invitation to live as God, the divine life. One more deep mystery, the freedom of becoming someone unique is given by God to each of us individually with liberty and freedom to pursue. Love in and amidst family members has a new meaning and tenderness now. We are able to see God’s face in each child, and each elder, and each stranger.


iii. As a conclusion of his life, Jesus, by his passion and resurrection restores the image and likeness of God in us as was in the beginning. As Jesus said, if the son sets you free, you are indeed free. Christianity’s birth after his resurrection gave our human family the open door to God to think of ourselves as beloved, restored, and blessed. Again, Jesus said fear not I will be with you always until the end, and what the Father has entrusted to me I give to you, go and disciple all nations. Christianity gave human life a new covenant, new direction, and a new way of living and loving. We are now made anew after the image of the Heavenly Adam, Jesus Christ. He taught us to love like that of the children of the kingdom of God, not only to like our fellow human beings, but to love them as we love ourselves. He also said, it is even greater for one to give one’s life for the sake of others as he did for us. Jesus showed us that there is no greater act than that. As he was raised in glory with his body glorious, so we shall by our love come to have a share with him in the kingdom of the Father. He/God is with us now and forever more, in thin and in thick, and as St. Paul tells us, nothing shall separate us from the love of God... Amen.


Pastor’s reflection ~ Fr. Mounir El- Rassi




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