



THE GRRRAPEVINE

"I am the Vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5)

Number 7

December 25, 2005

May the wonder and joy of Christ's birth
Bring peace to your heart, your home, your life and to all people.
To all, we wish a happy and holy Christmas season.

Merry Christmas Froehliche Weihnachten Boas Festas e Feliz Ano Novo
Feliz Navidad Sretan Bozic Glædelig Jul Vrolijk Kerstfeest Joyeux Noel
Kellemes Karacsonyi unnepekent Nollaig Shona Dhuit Buone Feste Natalizie
Maligayan Pasko! Feliz Natal Wesolych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia
Srozhdestvom Kristovym Chung Mung Giang Sinh Cestitamo Bozic

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Picking up on one of the suggestions from the "How to Build Community" list, we would like to invite members of the community to contribute small entries in the GRRRAPEVINE. We come from many countries and many cultural backgrounds. Each of us has particular customs and traditions that we celebrate as part of our family life each year. As we share these customs and traditions with others, it helps others to know us. As we get to know something about each other, it helps us to grow in appreciation of the wonderful gifts the members of the parish community bring to the community, and this helps us grow in relationship with one another. Members of the parish are invited to submit (by email, BLOG or in written form) short descriptions of Christmas customs and traditions they celebrate at home. Please include the country or culture of origin of these customs and traditions. If you wish to remain anonymous, that is fine, but we certainly invite you to identify yourself in the article. We will do this around the major celebrations of our year, so if you feel too rushed to do it during and for the Christmas season, think about Lent and Easter and submit articles for then. And, to kick things off... here are a couple of contributions!!

GERMAN

Giselle Jakobs

My parents immigrated to Canada back in the 1950s and were the only ones to leave the homeland. As such, our Christmas was always a small, intimate affair since there were only the four of us. Christmas always began with a good, long season of Advent! We would sit around the Advent Wreath in the evenings, and sing German Advent songs. On December 6, the Feast of Saint Nikolaus, my sister and I would get a shallow cardboard tray filled with nuts and mandarin oranges and other treats. During Advent, my mother would bake all manner of Christmas goodies: Marzipan, Lebkuchen, Berliner Brot, Spritzgebäck, Kipfel, Stollen. All exceedingly yummy! On Christmas Eve, my Dad would take us kids out for dinner and then take us to the Children's Liturgy Celebration. When we got home, the house would be magically decorated (by a madly scrambling Mom!): the tree decorated with straw stars, the crib scene, the presents, the lit fire, the German music playing in the background (no stockings!). But before we could open our gifts, I would read the Lukan Nativity account and my sister (younger) would recite a Christmas poem that she had memorized. Finally, we could open the gifts, starting with the parcels and packages from Germany!! Christmas Day was more relaxed and we would usually go to Mass again in the morning, after phoning the German relatives. Christmas Day dinner was usually a beef filet roast or rouladen, since my Dad was no big fan of chicken or turkey or goose!!



UKRAINIAN

Richard Beaudette, OMI

My maternal grandparents came to Canada from the Ukraine at the beginning of the 20th Century and homesteaded in central Alberta. They remained close to their rural roots and their culture, maintaining their language and customs until they died. Every year on Christmas Eve, we would gather at the Golinowski house after all the chores were done on the various farms. Milking and the other chores were done early that day, as the celebration started as soon as possible after the rising of the evening star. It was the custom for the youngest in the family to have the task of keeping watch for the star, and only after it was sighted could the meal begin. We would gather around the table for the traditional Christmas Eve dinner, consisting of twelve dishes. The twelve dishes symbolized the twelve apostles. We had such traditional delicacies as sweet wheat pudding, sauerkraut soup, jellied fish, fried fish cabbage rolls, perogies, pickled beets and all other things Ukrainian. It was a feast!!!! There was no meat at this meal – it was a day of abstinence even if it definitely was not one of fasting. After the meal, which lasted several hours, we would exchange gifts and all would head off to Midnight Mass – some at the Ukrainian Catholic Church and others of us at the Roman Catholic Church. We were “ecumenical” even then! It was hard to stay awake with such full stomachs.

FRENCH-CANADIAN

Richard Beaudette, OMI

Thank goodness for being part of a family that celebrated two cultures! After Midnight Mass, it was off to the Beaudette house for the Reveille. More food, of course, but this time the central feature was the tourtiere, or meat pie. There was always plenty of food, wine, storytelling and singing, which would carry on until dawn. Then it was home to the farm to take care of the morning chores and collapse into bed for most of the day, getting up to do the afternoon chores, have a light supper at home and exchange our family gifts.

LISTENING CENTRES

As part of the mission in November, the parish was divided into Listening Centres. These essentially are small faith sharing groups. There are guidelines and resources for the gatherings. Some people have asked about the continuation of the Listening Centres, and others have asked about becoming part of one. Below are the names, phone numbers and areas of the hosts of the Listening Centres in St. Mary's Parish. Contact the person who lives closest to you to find out about times and plans, etc.

Tony Cue	962-8680	Hart Highway
Diane Dauvin	563-8538	Central
Mary Crooks	561-1288	Connaught
Doris daSilva	561-0305	Central
Ann McErlean	564-2326	Seymour
Edna Cutway	562-8137	St. Mary's
Barb Marwood	563-0846	Westwood
Tom Makowsky	564-3838	Spruceland
Buddy & Julie Brintjes	563-7822	Quinson
Bernie Trottier	564-8943	Cranbrook Hill
Paul Laliberte	563-8465	DPTodd
Ann Robertson	964-6537	College Heights
Janice Haddock	563-0159	Exhibition
Eugene Nykoluk	563-4499	Heritage

NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS?

Are you elderly or physically challenged? We have a free taxi service (sponsored by the Knights) to get you to Church and back home on Sundays! Just phone PG Taxi and give them the account number (which you can get from Jeannine at 564-4097).

