

Ce qui est gratifiant, c'est que nos travaux sont reconnus grâce à des publications et des livres. Un nouveau livre, très beau et très cher, qui est sorti récemment et dont j'ai vu un exemplaire : *Angraecoids of Africa and Madagascar* tient compte de nos découvertes, et nos noms figurent à 3 ou 4 endroits de ce livre. Quand j'ai vu ça, je dois l'avouer, il m'est monté quelques bouffées d'orgueil pour lesquelles je dois encore me confesser.

Assez écrit. J'espère ne pas vous ennuyer avec mes histoires. Bon courage à tous dans vos tâches que je vous souhaite de mener à bien.

Jean-Paul Lebel

SURREY, B.C. Dec. 1 ushered in the Polish communities' St. Andrew's Dinner Dance to a good crowd of participants at OLG School auditorium. Each of us had a delicious taste of the wonderful spread prepared for all in attendance. The 2nd day of this last month of 2007, and the First Sunday of Advent, held our Parish Open House, Fr. Richard's pastoral visit to Surrey, and the Knights of Columbus pancake breakfast all rolled into one. This also included our first major snowfall of the season that caused a lot of havoc on city streets. Our quarterly day of recollection was scheduled to be held at the Abbey in Mission, but we had to cancel because of the treacherous road conditions, and stayed put with Fr. Richard giving us a morning talk in our community room.

December was certainly a busy, sacramental month filled with numerous confessions, novenas for school and parish staff, altar servers, and various organizations like the *Praise Team*, *Youth for Christ*, *Couples for Christ*. Add to that the Christmas parties, the very successful Knights of Columbus fund raiser, Christmas concert and dinner dance on the 15th that had over 300 in attendance, entertainment by our 9:30 a.m. parish choir under the title of "Psalm 118: v.8" accompanied by the Band *Alleluia*.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception was highlighted by a concelebrated Mass held on Dec. 7 with all the Salesians present with an informal

sharing afterwards of finger food and "goodies" in the Mary Help of Christians Hall.

One outstanding event throughout Advent was the weekly adding of decorations or enhancement of simple wreaths to eventually become real Christmas wreaths. Not only the church and bell tower were outlined with lights this year, but the rectory, youth center, convent and school, and the four trees at the entrance to the church. All made a festive appearance especially after the two snow falls that we experienced. The Chaldean community built the Christmas crib this year, while the Legion of Mary decorated the wreaths, and the Laotian community purchased the Christmas flowers while Bro. Jerry did the arranging. The seniors' 50+ Club decorated the two lighted Christmas trees.

Frs. John and Dave and Bro. Jerry represented the community at the *Catholic Women's League* Christmas dinner held at a family restaurant--buffet style. Door prizes were given and the familiar carols were sung with all the festive trimmings to the enjoyment of all. Our Lady of Good Counsel school children put on their regular Christmas pageant to an overflowing audience in the Don Bosco Youth Center that involved every student in something, plus Fr. Dave, who also said the children's Christmas Eve Mass.

There were five Christmas Eve Masses filled to overflowing, plus the six Christmas Day Masses. It kept everyone on the go, "watching the fort" to avoid any robberies. Certainly a "good tired" was experienced by all after the events were over. The parishioners were outstanding in their goodness to us, and it wasn't until 8:15 p.m. Christmas Day when we were able, as a community, to enjoy some festive time, food and laughter together, along with some relaxed listening of carols.

The parishioners outdid themselves in celebrating Fr. John's (Dec. 26) and Fr. Mario's (Dec. 28) birthdays. Baked goods, gifts and songs honoured them on their special days. In turn the community presented cards and presents too. On December 30 one of the choirs surprised them after the 8 a.m. Mass with a serenade of songs, birthday cake and breakfast with everything. They had them both sit down in the middle of Mary Help of Christians Hall to enjoy this special performance "just for them."

A HAPPY HOLY NEW YEAR!

**BONNE, HEUREUSE ET SAINTE
ANNÉE 2008!**

FELIZ AÑO NUEVO!