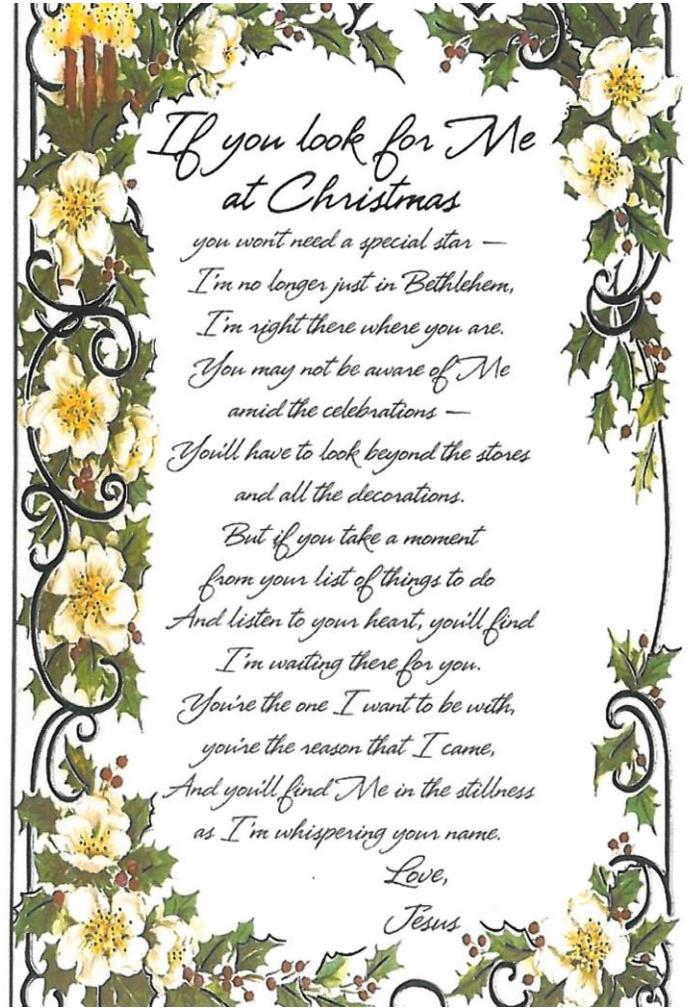




*Militia Immaculata Okanagan*  
NEWSLETTER  
December 2014



From Father Sebastian

Dear Members of the Militia of the Immaculata,

I am sure all of you are busy preparing for the celebrations of Christmas. Even though the world around us is mainly thinking of the external aspects of this wonderful feast, we as people of faith must think about the spiritual dimensions of Christmas. When we reflect on the following words of St. Peter Chrysologus, one can say that Christmas provides us with a great opportunity to ponder on our human dignity and how much God has loved us:

“Why then, man, are you so worthless in your own eyes and yet so precious to God? Why render yourself such dishonor when you are honored by him? Why do you ask how you were created and do not seek to know why you were made? Was not this entire visible universe made for your dwelling? It was for you that the light dispelled the overshadowing gloom; for your sake was the night regulated and the day measured, and for you were the heavens embellished with the varying brilliance of the sun, the moon and the stars. The earth was adorned with flowers, groves and fruit; and the constant marvelous variety of lovely living things was created in the air, the fields, and the seas for you, lest sad solitude destroy the joy of God’s new creation. And the Creator still works to devise things that can add to your glory. He has made you in his image that you might in your person make the invisible Creator present on earth; he has made you his legate, so that the vast empire of the world might have the Lord’s representative. Then in his mercy God assumed what he made in you; he wanted now to be truly manifest in man, just as he had wished to be revealed in man as in an image. Now he would be in reality what he had submitted to be in symbol.”

I take this opportunity to wish you all a joyful Christmas and a Holy New Year!

God Bless!

Fr. Sebastian Puthenpura

## **CHRISTMAS : DIFFERENT THINGS FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE**

Shepherds and wise men, inn keepers and Herod.  
Christmas means different things for different people.

For the inn keeper there was no room for Christ.  
Joseph and Mary were looking for a place to stay but not only was there no room at the inn, there was no room in the inn keeper's heart.

The inn keeper saw that they were not from Bethlehem.

He saw that they had nowhere to stay.

He saw that Mary was with child, but there was no room for compassion or generosity.

He did not want to get involved in the problems and life of another, so he turned them away from his inn and from his heart.

On the first Christmas and every Christmas since and probably this Christmas too, there are still inn keepers in the world who have no room.

No room for Christ.

No room for the homeless.

No room for those in need.

For Herod, the Christ Child was a threat.

A threat to his power, his throne, his tiny little kingdom.

So he tried to kill Jesus, because the Christ child would cast down the mighty from their thrones and lift up the lowly.

He would fill the empty with good things and send the rich away empty.

On that first Christmas and every Christmas since and probably this Christmas too, there are still Herod's threatened by the Christ Child.

Threatened that they would lose their money.

Threatened that their tiny little kingdom that they have worked so hard to build will all come tumbling down if power, money, and influence were no longer the motivating factor in people's lives.

For the Shepherds, the Christ child was their hope and fulfillment.

The Shepherds were not only the lower class they were the empty class.

They not only had no power or influence or money, they had no hope for change in their life.

They had no hope that their emptiness would be filled.

So they heard the angel's song of praise and good will that a child had been born who would bring them hope. On that first Christmas and every Christmas since and probably this Christmas too, there are still shepherds who can hear angels sing.

There are still poor and lonely and empty people in the world who look to the Christ Child as their hope and their fulfillment.

For the Wise Men, the Christ Child was the Light and the Truth.

What the Wise Men searched for all of their life was not power and riches but enlightenment and truth, so they followed the star to the Christ Child.

And they gave Him all they had in exchange for His Light and His Truth.

On that Christmas and every Christmas since and probably this Christmas too, there are still Wise Men who search not for power or riches or pleasure or possessions but for Enlightenment and Truth.

What Christmas means for each one of us depends on who we are and what we are looking for.

Christ is here for each one of us.

He knocks on the door of our hearts.

He comes to dwell in our midst.

Angels still announce Him and Stars still point out the way to Him.

And the true meaning of Christmas is still found only in Christ!

In the Immaculata,  
Fr. Patrick Greenough OFM Conv.  
National President of MI for USA & Canada  
MI International Vice-President

## **THE GIFTS OF THE SEASON**

The great gifts of this season – or any season- can't be put under the tree; you can't wear them or eat them or drive them or play with them. We spend so much time on the lesser gifts – toys, sweaters, jewelry, the mint, anise and dill of Christmas – and so little on the great gifts – understanding, grace, peace and forgiveness. It's no wonder that the holiday leaves us empty, because when it's over, the only reminders we have are the dirty dishes and the January bills.

## **THE GREAT GIFT**

The great gifts are like the one gift- the gift that began it all back there in Bethlehem of Judea. You can't buy them, and they're not on anybody's shopping list. They come as He came – quietly, freely, unexpectedly- and if you're not careful, you'll miss them entirely.



## **MI OKANAGAN EXECUTIVE**

Father Sebastian Puthenpura	Spiritual Director
Annette Leib	Co-ordinator
Eileen Collins	Asst. Co-ord.
Jerry Dusik	Treasurer
Gerda Seewald	
Paulette Wolfe	Secretary
	Newsletter

## **MI MASS SCHEDULE**

9 AM First Saturday Mass	Feast Day Mass	
Jan 3	July 4	The Annunciation
Feb 7	Aug 1	- March 25
Mar 7	Oct 3	The Nativity of Mary
May 2	Nov 7	- Sep 8
June 6		The Assumption
		- August 15
		The Immaculate
		Conception
		- Dec 8