

EDITORIAL

*From the desk of the late
Hartley Coles, Editor Emeritus*

Merry Christmas

The pressure to either dump or change the meaning of Christmas is back with us again. There's the usual theories floating around that the whole story is a great myth calculated to bamboozle the public, that the Bible accounts are merely fiction. Some say there is no proof that Christ ever existed and the whole structure of church and belief is a monstrous fabrication foisted on us. It's hard to believe some people would go to such lengths to disprove oral and written history but they're out there after 2,000 years, still trying to turn the tide.

They grab onto minor difficulties with dates, for instance, the actual date of the birth of Jesus, to illustrate their points, as if it matters. It is probable he was born on December 25, our present Christmas Day, but there's no real proof. However, there's more for it than against it.

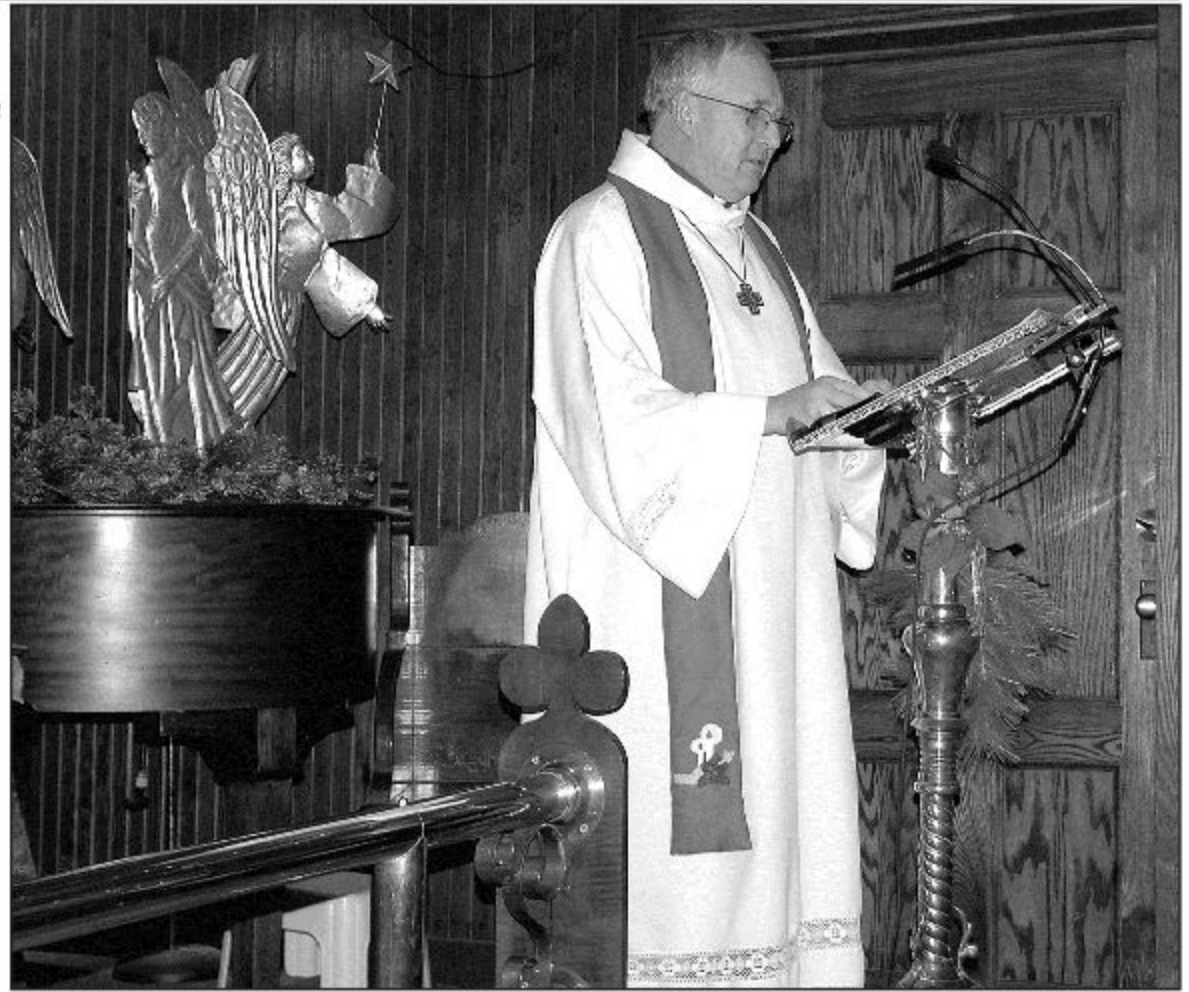
It is certain that Christ was born after the Roman year 747, and before the Roman year 749. That means he was born between five and seven years before the usual accepted year of the Christian era. The mistake originated in the year 525 when Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk, decided to draw up an exact calendar. He calculated Christ was born in 753 after the founding of Rome, but it was certain he was mistaken for a number of reasons. However, it in no way affects the fact of the birth of Christ. Perhaps the gospel of Luke, relying on witnesses, colours events that some may find incredible, but the life of Christ is indeed incredible. It needs no gilding or confection to highlight its effect on the world and its peoples over the centuries.

Despite the naysayers, the spirit and celebration of Christmas is still with us.

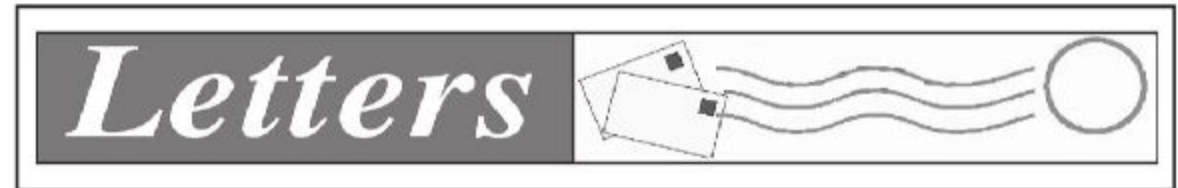
The First Noel

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people; to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you – you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours! When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another. Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us. So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

- Luke 2:1-16



HOLIDAY SPIRITS: The Reverend Brian Galligan delivered the Homily during the Candlelight Service at St. Alban the Martyr church on Sunday. – Ted Tyler photo



Grateful thanks

To the Editor,

I wanted to send a huge thank you to the wonderful businesses and people in this community. Last night, I had a visit from a wonderful young woman named Nicole Wilkes. She read the story about my husband (in The New Tanner) and wanted to do something for my family.

She went to the local businesses and asked them to

donate goods and services to give to us and the response was overwhelming. I am still in shock. So, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the businesses who donated including Acton Optical, Big Fat Greek Souvlaki, Blue Springs Spa, Dr. Susan MacPhail, Dollar Stretcher Days, First Choice, Global Pets, Giant Tiger, M&M Meats, Sobeys, Tim Hortons, Rallis

Burger, Roxy Coffee and Willow Lane.

We thank you for your amazing generosity and thank you Nicole for showing us what the true meaning of Christmas is. Please remember to shop local because our local businesses are the best!

Regards
Jennifer, Doug, Ashley and
Jessica Gerrard
Acton, ON



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