



BOXING DAY

Boxing Day has been celebrated on December 26 in most British Commonwealth countries since 1871. However, few Canadians today know about its Christian origins.

Most Canadians would tell you that Boxing Day is our answer to the American's Black Friday. People in many provinces stand in line waiting for stores to open so they can snatch up good deals. Some stores do not open until after Boxing Day. So as a result Canadians can now wait in lines throughout an entire Boxing Week! And if shopping isn't to your liking, there are many sporting events to watch on television.

In contrast to today's version, Boxing Day has a more virtuous history. Instead of focusing on our own material desires, Boxing Day used to be about the ministry of humble generosity.

- During Advent, Anglican parishes would put out a box for parishioners to put donations in. On the day after Christmas the box would be opened and the donations were distributed to the poor.
- The day after Christmas was the day that the Aristocracy would give presents (or boxes) to their servants. The servants would then return to their homes to celebrate their Christmas on Boxing Day.

"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more." (Luke 12:48)

Today we have an opportunity to renew our Christian call to humble generosity. Jesus

taught his disciples that much is expected from those who have been given much (cf. Luke 12:48). As Christians we have an obligation to not only care for the poor, but to understand that all we have is a blessing from God to be shared.

The busyness of our lives can easily consume us. If we are to witness humble generosity to our children, we must begin with an honest assessment of our own lives. Through Baptism, we have the grace and strength to prioritize our needs and moderate our desires. God has blessed us with so much. Perhaps this Boxing Day, we can demonstrate our Christian call to humble generosity.

IDEAS FOR YOUR FAMILY TIME

- Invite your children to share about when someone has helped them. Help them to understand that when we help someone, we are helping Jesus.
- Christmastime can easily be taken over by consumerism and over-indulgences. Review the Works of Mercy as a family. Decide how the family can exercise the virtues of humility and generosity this Christmas season.
- For Boxing Day this year, consider boxing up gifts to donate to the local food pantry or Catholic charity.