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Holy Cross

Roman Catholic Parish

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***As per the current COVID-19 protocol, all Masses are cancelled, the Church and Adoration Chapel are closed until at least January 8, 2021.**

PARISH CENTRE OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri — 8:30am - 12pm
(closed to the public)

PASTORAL STAFF

Mass Celebrant

His Grace, Archbishop Albert LeGatt

Catechetics Coordinator

Sr. Bibiana Ikwun, HHCJ

Parish Life Director

Sheila Cornick

Office Administrator

Claire DuBois

Office Assistant

Rachel de Jesus

Custodian

Gerard O'Neill

Holy Cross Food Bank

Sheila Cornick & Marianne Savard

Holy Cross Youth Group

Vincent Dubé &
Dominique Gougeon-Gagnon

Dearest Parishioners,

When I heard the news on Monday that there would be no Mass this Christmas I was utterly and thoroughly shattered. Not just because I cannot begin to fathom Christmas without Mass and what that truly means, but also because I knew I had to put something together for the bulletin and I could not even begin to imagine what I was going to say to you.

As I write this, I still don't know what to say. What do you say to the faithful of this beloved parish when something we hold so dear has been taken from us? "Oh don't worry there is always next year?" or "we can always go to Springs Church and watch their service on the Jumbotron from the parking lot." My heart hurts for us. Since the start of this second lockdown I've searched for the message in all of this; what does God want me to learn in this? What is he trying to teach me? Where is He in all this madness? It has frustrated me far more than I care to admit because I truly don't know.

My father was a very logical and linear thinker and when he would try to teach me something and I would get confused or lost in the process he would always say "if you get lost or you don't know what to do go back to first principles, always go back to first principles cause everything has first principles". We may not know what the message is here, why this is happening, what God's plan or will is; or how to deal with what we have lost; but, we know what the first principles are.

He will never leave you nor forsake you.

Trust in him at all times

The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.

Be not afraid, I go before you always

God will neither fail you nor abandon you

The lord is my light and my salvation

Cling to these first principles as you would a life preserver in a stormy ocean because like the storm, this too shall pass.—*Sheila Cornick, Parish Life Director*

Today, the third Sunday of Advent is called 'Gaudete Sunday' which means 'Joy' or Rejoice'. The opening antiphon for today's liturgy asks us to **Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near.** Today, on our Advent Wreath we light our pink candle to mark this day of joy.



Third Sunday of Advent

St. Paul's advice and encouragement from the first reading today gives this third Sunday of Advent its traditional name *Gaudete Sunday*. Joy is the central message of our readings and prayers this Sunday, and indeed the whole of Advent and the celebration of Christ.

One of the most well-known Christmas carols is 'Joy to world.' The words to this carol were written by Isaac Watts in 1719. At Christmas it will be sung all over the world. The music for it comes from Handel's 'Messiah.'

(continued on page 2)

Third Sunday of Advent December 13, 2020

1st Reading:

Isaiah 63.16b-17; 64.1, 3-8

Psalms Luke 1

My soul shall exult in my God.

2nd Reading:

1 Thessalonians 5.16-24

Gospel:

John 1.6-8, 19-28

(continued from page 1)

The first words that Mary hears when she is told that she is going to be the mother of Jesus are, *'Rejoice, so highly favoured.'* Mary is to be filled with joy because God has called her by her name and her son will be the long awaited Messiah. When she goes to see Elizabeth her cousin, she breaks into song, singing out loudly, *'My souls proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my saviour'*. Mary does not keep her good news or her joy to herself, she freely shares them Elizabeth and the whole world. When the angels appeared to the shepherds they heard this life-giving message, *'Do not be afraid, I bring you news of great joy.'* The good news of Jesus' birth is meant not only for the shepherds, it continues to be good news for each of us today.

We pray these words after the Our Father, *'as we wait in joyful for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ'*. This is still the central message of Advent. We are called to wait for the birth of Jesus and we are to wait in hope joyfully. As we wait, we are not to be afraid, anxious or worried; we are to wait in *joyful hope*. Why? Because, as the opening antiphon tells us, *'The Lord is very near.'*

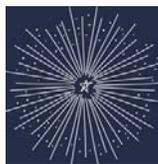
Like Mary who shared her joy with Elizabeth, today each of us is asked to be a person of joy and we are asked to share that our joy with others. There are many people, some of whom we may even know, who have little reason to be joyful at this time of the year. As Mary did with Elizabeth, may we follow her example and share our joy with all those meet during these last few days and weeks of Advent. May we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

(Source: Michael Moore OMI)



CHRISTMAS SEASON ACTIVITIES

The Archdiocese of Saint Boniface has shared with us two very simple initiatives in the Christmas Season to help foster a feeling of community and connectedness. Both initiatives can be found on the Archdiocesan website at <https://www.archsaintboniface.ca/main.php?p=1037>.



Christmas Stars in Our Windows

To celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus, everyone is invited to place a star in their window for the entire liturgical season of Christmas, from December 25, 2020 to January 10, 2021. This is to symbolize that Christ is in our homes. You can paint a star, put an ornament, or create one out of paper. Visit www.archsaintboniface.ca for examples.

To view Poster, click [here](#).

Here are some videos that show you how to make lovely stars:

Paper bag star:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIV8SElerFc>

3D Christmas Star:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iraWBwcOfU8>



Epiphany House Blessing

To bring encouragement and blessings to families for 2021, we would like to share a special European Catholic tradition, dating back centuries, of blessing homes at the Epiphany (January 6th) using blessed chalk. With the blessing of the chalk, we are asking the Lord to bless our home, all inhabitants of our home as well as any guests who may pass through our door throughout the year. Please visit the diocesan [website](#) for more information on blessing your home.



YOUTUBE VIDEOS TO WATCH

How to Make a Spiritual Communion

<https://youtu.be/Gg0m9OLRzoi>

Scientific Evidence of Eucharistic Miracles (Inspired by Carlo Acutis)

<https://youtu.be/soCkftBBsBo>

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

Third Sunday of Advent
December 13, 2020



“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

This scripture reading sums up Stewardship. “Rejoice always” means place your trust in God; He will provide all that you need. “Pray constantly” means prayer should be a running conversation with God throughout the whole day, every day. “Give thanks in all circumstances” means even in bad situations, thank God. Suffering a little bit helps build empathy for others in similar situations and shows our dependence on God.

DECEMBER PAPAL PRAYER INTENTIONS

Evangelization: *For a life of prayer:* We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ may be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

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PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The parish office will be **open** from **8:30am to 12:00pm** on **Wednesday, December 23** and will be **closed for the holidays beginning the afternoon of Wednesday, December 23**. We will **reopen** in the New Year on **Monday, January 4, 2021** during regular office hours.

MASS INTENTIONS

For everyone who has booked a Mass Intention during the Mass cancellations, we will reschedule your Mass Intention once we know when Masses will resume.



WARM HUG WINTER COLLECTION IN LIEU OF ADVENT TREE

ADVANCE NOTICE TO PARISHIONERS

Women and children in shelters are still in desperate need of mittens, scarves, hats, and socks in spite of COVID-19.



Between December 13 and the end of January, the CWL will gladly be accepting donations through the parish office (providing any restrictions), by depositing them in the designated bin **located between the office doors**.

Please accumulate your collection so that you can make only one deposit at the parish center.

Thank you for your support and be well and safe.

(Image Source: <https://www.freepik.com/vectors/snow>>Snow vector created by macrovector -www.freepik.com)

PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Father, just as You sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus, help me to clear the path in my heart, too. Show me the distractions in my life that block me from all-out worship of You this Advent. Lord, I await Your coming! As I celebrate the first Advent—the first coming—I look toward the day where I will see You face to face. I imagine what it will be like. Give me a heart, Lord, that looks for Your coming on a daily basis. Help me to live my life where I'm constantly seeking Your presence. My offering to You today is my righteous life for I know I am only clean because of Jesus. Show me today how I need to be refined, purified, forgiven. Give me the strength to ask for forgiveness and to then change my ways.

(Source: Sarah Martin)



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