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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

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 20, 2020

1st Reading:

2 Samuel 7.1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Psalms 89

***Forever I will sing of your
steadfast love, O Lord.***

2nd Reading:

Romans 16.25-27

Gospel:

Luke 1.26-38

Dearest Parishioners,

Well, here we are, the Fourth Sunday of Advent and I can scarcely believe it. I am not sure where Advent has gone but I suspect its rapid passing has something to do with missing the reference points that come with the weekly Mass and my hour at the Adoration Chapel - I won't dwell on that because it is enough to make me cry no matter how many Panda videos I watch.



Something interesting happened this week. I have shared my struggles with you along with my resolve to return to "first principals" – God loves me as though I was the only one He created and He will not abandon me. I have had some success with that but without Mass and the Adoration Chapel it certainly does not feel like the advent of past years. But, I was driving to the Church one evening this week and as I came down Traverse, I saw someone standing at the window of the Adoration Chapel. I immediately thought, "Who is that scallywag and what are they doing skulking around our Adoration Chapel"? (*It sounds a little more dramatic if you talk like a pirate as you say "scallyway" and "skulking"*).

As I drew closer, turns out it was a man humbled in prayer in front of the window where he could scarcely catch a glimpse of the Monstrance amid the darkness in the Chapel. I thought, "Wow, I am whining about no Mass and the closed Adoration Chapel, and here this gentleman stands at a window, in the cold and prays because he knows, somewhere in the darkness, behind the velvet curtain is his Christ." A locked door didn't stop him. Hmmmm, do you figure this was some kind of teaching moment?

It was actually more like one of those quick cuffs on that back of the head that I used to get from my grade 12 English teacher Mr. Price. I suddenly wanted to be that man in front of the window, unphased by lockdowns and closures and COVID – just standing and growing where he's planted.

It reminded me of the Dr. Seuss book, "*The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*". The Grinch took away everything from the Whos down in Whoville, only to find that Christmas came anyway because it wasn't a thing, or a place and it certainly was not something that anyone could take away – not if you didn't let them.

"Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small,

Was singing without any presents at all!"

"It came without ribbons, it came without tags.

It came without packages, boxes, or bags." – (Dr. Seuss)

We can do this. We will stand with our feet fixed on the rock, in joyful anticipation of that time when we again will be together at Mass with our Lord, full and present in the Eucharist. In the meantime, it's not too late to ready ourselves; it's never too late. Take these final days to find Christ in everything and everybody. Be the man at the window.

"Christmas Day will always be

Just as long as we have we." – (Dr. Seuss)

Sheila Cornick, Parish Life Director

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT REFLECTION

The fourth candle of Advent is called the **"Angel Candle"** and symbolizes **peace**. This name comes from the fact that the angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace to our hearts and to our world!

Advent seems to be such a lovely period of the liturgical year. There is a feeling of expectation and yearning, beautiful passages from scripture are read every day, the news is replete with stories of people helping or gifting one another, and twinkling, colorful lights appear on houses. The season of Advent is too brief, almost ending before we soak in its beauty.

Several times during these weeks we have heard the story of Gabriel's visit to Mary. It is familiar to us and so we think we understand it's message. It was certainly startling for the young girl, Mary, and she must have been confused and excited at the same time. I imagine she was quite perplexed about how she would explain her circumstances, especially to Joseph and her parents. Perhaps she did not know it, but it was her acceptance that would set the stage for the coming of the Messiah and for the events of the remainder of her life. Mary's willingness in spite of her misgivings led to Christmas and, ultimately, to Calvary. Her "yes" was a costly one.

Often, we fail to recognize that Gabriel's message was initiated by God. God always initiates. We sometimes try to do things that we think will be pleasing to God, while ignoring the life circumstances that God places us in.

It takes a quiet and loving heart to see what is right before us, or in us.

Our lives are filled with everyday situations which we ignore easily, because they seem uncomfortable or mundane, yet it is there where our invitation lies. We fail to recognize declining health, our familiar surroundings, opportunities to use our hidden gifts or talents, a relationship seeking forgiveness or strengthening, as invitations from God which will in turn invite us to deeper union.

As we approach the final days of Advent and prepare for Christmas, let us ponder these thoughts:

- can I feel **BLESSED** in my present situation? Can I give a wholehearted "yes" to it?
- can I have faith in the journey ahead of me and be convinced that in every part of it, God will be present?
- can I give an enthusiastic "yes" to the unknown, trusting in God's love?

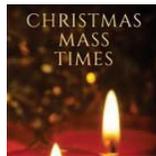
As we approach Christmas this year, let us be reminded that God-with-us makes even the impossible possible! Christmas blessings!

(Source: Sister Denise Roche, GNSH)

LIVESTREAM CHRISTMAS EVE MASS AT HOLY CROSS

A special **10:30pm** Christmas Eve Mass presided by His Grace, Archbishop Albert LeGatt will be livestreamed from Holy Cross Parish on [Facebook](#) only.

To find a list of the diocesan Masses presided by His Grace, Archbishop Albert LeGatt, as well as those of 18 other parishes, [click here](#).



STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20, 2020



"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28)

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God's call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ's light to the world through our gratitude and generosity.

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.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT PRAYER



Lord, in a season when every heart should be happy and light, many of us are struggling with the heaviness of life – burdens that steal the joy right out of our stockings. Tragedy arrives as innocent victims suffer, and an inner voice whispers, "Be afraid!" We need your peace, Jesus.

We confess that our hearts are too often filled with wonder of a different kind: wondering when the bills will be paid, when the terror will stop, when rest will come. Will it ever? Is the message still true?

In a world where worry, not peace, prevails, stir up that good news again. This Advent, make it real in our hearts. Never have we needed Your joy and peace more than now.

Thank You for the gift of Jesus, our Immanuel, the Word made flesh. We not only need Your peace and joy; Lord, we crave it. You've promised rest for the weary, victory for the battle-scarred, peace for the anxious, and acceptance for the broken hearted – not just at Advent, but every day of every year.

Your name is still called "Wonderful," "Counselor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," and "The Prince of Peace." We know that peace on earth can only come when hearts find peace with You. You are still our Joy. You are still our Peace. You are no longer a babe in the manger. You are Lord of lords and King of kings. And we still celebrate You as Lord – this Christmas and always.

(Source: Edited from Rebecca Barlow Jordan's "[A Prayer for Peace & Joy at Christmas](#)")



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