

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“What do you Hope For?” (Fr. Pat’s Reflection on Advent)

If someone were to ask you, “What do you hope for?”, I would suspect you might have to pause before coming up with an answer.

Perhaps you might be hoping for good health, or a good employment, or a chance at happiness with a loving spouse, future children, or retirement. Perhaps your hopes and dreams are centered around your family, children, or other loved ones. Perhaps you hope for a better world, a more peaceful and less troublesome future.

What about the spiritual level? What do you hope for there? Perhaps you are searching for meaning to your life, or desiring to come closer to God, or to simply find God. Your hope is that this discovery may reveal who you are and what your purpose or vocation in life is called to be. Hopefully, this discovery might bring you peace and consolation. Thank God for “hope”! Thank God for Advent!

Advent is God’s gift of hope to all of us. As we pray with the scriptures of Advent we will find that indeed hope is everywhere! Advent celebrates the hope of the whole community.

In the scriptures we hear the great prophets proclaiming the news that the long-awaited Messiah is coming. There is excitement and rejoicing. John the Baptist, the great prophet, sent by God, is calling out to us to prepare our hearts, to WAKE UP, and to be more alert and ready to receive Christ who desires to come into our lives. John tells us that our lives are not called to be routine, but rather they should be filled with excitement and hope. Why? Because God is sending His Son to us so that we might come to know who we are and come to know the great love the Father, our Creator, has for us and the fullness of life he provides for US.

John tells us, “He is coming!” However, are our hearts and minds ready to receive and embrace Him? Are we ready to prepare a path for Him, to let Him in to our lives, to turn away from sin and despair, and to let Him become the Lord of our life, the One who helps us to have hope?

In speaking of this season of Advent, a few years ago, Pope Benedict XVI said that we should look to another model of hope in this season of Advent for answers. Her name is Mary. She, like us, longed for meaning, longed for God. As Pope Benedict said, “Mary belonged to that part of the people of Israel who in Jesus’ time were waiting with heartfelt expectation for the Savior’s coming. She could not have imagined how this coming would be brought about. Perhaps she expected a coming in glory. The moment the Angel Gabriel entered her House and told her that the Lord, the Savior, wanted to take flesh in her, must have been all the more surprising to her”.

Yet, Mary listened, and allowed the words of the angel to touch her heart, the angel who came from God, who spoke for God. Mary, with a tremendous act of faith and obedience, said “yes”, let it be me, let it happen to me, and so it was that she became the

“dwelling place” of the Lord, a true temple in the world and a “door” by which the Lord entered the world.

While the coming of Jesus was unique in Mary, Jesus nonetheless wishes to come again and again into our lives in each one of us. He wants to come through you and me into the world anew. Are you willing to give of your body, of your flesh, of your time, so that He can find a dwelling place in you?

As Pope Benedict said, “God calls us to communion in him, which will be completely fulfilled in the Return of Christ, and he himself strives to ensure that we will arrive prepared for this final and decisive encounter. The future is, so to speak, contained in the present, or better, in the presence of God, Himself, who in unending love does not leave us on our own or abandon us even for an instant.”

This Advent, let us not simply think of Jesus’ coming as a “Remembrance” of His first coming at Christmas; rather, let us appreciate His daily coming into our lives, in the ordinary events, and through the Eucharist and the Word we listen to at Mass. To see His coming in the people and places we least expect. Don’t look to the sky, as the scriptures point out; rather, look into the story of your everyday life and recognize the Lord who comes to you in ways you least expect.

Paul Murray, an Irish Dominican poet, once said, “God loves us so much that if we should cease to exist, he would die of sadness”. As much as we hope and long for closeness to God, God is also doing the same: Hoping and longing for US.

In this season of Advent, may you find the hope and consolation you are longing for.

Christmas Angel Tree

Once again parishioners are welcome to participate in the Angel Tree project benefitting needy children around St. Paul’s Basilica in downtown Toronto, as well as less fortunate children within our own parish area.

The Angel Tree will be decorated with Christmas tags that have the name, age and gender of a child on each tag. Please take one or more tags and purchase an appropriate gift for the child. Return the *unwrapped* gifts to the church and place them under the tree.

The tree will be available this weekend Nov. 28/29, Dec. 5/6, Dec. 12/13 and *the gifts will be delivered to St. Paul’s after the 11 a.m. Mass - December 13.*

Thank you for your continued support of this worthwhile project!

Visit to St. Michael’s Cathedral

Fr. Pat has arranged for a bus to transport people to an Open House at St. Michael’s Cathedral on Tuesday, Dec. 8th, leaving the parish at 10:00 a.m. and departing the Cathedral at 1:30 p.m. There is no charge; please sign-up in the lobby at the Reception Table.



Mass Intentions

Saturday, November 28th, 2015

4:30 p.m. + Edward Laughlan

Sunday, November 29th, 2015

8:00 a.m. + Jerzy Wojdylo

9:30 a.m. + Giuseppe & Ida Ruggiero

11:00 a.m. + Nish & Shefali Mukerji

Monday, November 30th, 2015

8:30 a.m. + Maria Kang

Tuesday, December 1st, 2015

8:30 a.m. + Marina Loan

Wednesday, December 2nd, 2015

8:30 a.m. + Franc Zelko

Thursday, December 3rd, 2015

8:30 a.m. + Sister Gloria

Friday, December 4th, 2015

8:30 a.m. + Emily Joseph Picco

7:30 p.m. + Henry Chiu

Family of Faith

St. Edward's is joining with other parishes in launching the Family of Faith campaign, to help to address critical priorities that will benefit Catholics all across the Archdiocese.

The Family of Faith will also help our parish, too. For every dollar raised, our parish will receive 25 cents. If we exceed our goal, we will keep 75 cents of every dollar over goal. Our parish goal is \$535,000 (of which 25%, or \$133,750, would come back to us). The priorities for our parish: invest in youth ministry, ministry to seniors, and other ministries, and to upgrade the interior of the church as well as to re-pave the parking lot. Please help us to achieve these priorities by offering a pledge. All parishioners will receive a pledge form in the mail.

Heavenly Father

We ask you to be with us as we work together
as a family of faith,

sharing and following the example of your son

Jesus in loving service.

May we be inspired by your divine love,
as we share our time, talent and treasure to

strengthen our family of faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Project Hope

The Project Hope Refugee Committee has been working very diligently with the Office of Refugees of the Archdiocese. They are currently attending various meetings in preparation for welcoming a refugee family with the support of our parish community. The parish will be informed once final decisions have been made. In the meantime, should any parishioner know of a possible accommodation (apartment or house) which can be rented by the family once they come, please contact Fr. Pat at the parish office.

Senior Pre-Christmas Lunch

Fr. Pat will be hosting a pre-Christmas Senior's Lunch on Wednesday, Dec. 9th, at 12:00 Noon, in the parish hall. Since Fr. Pat celebrates Mass at Canterbury Place, Lansing Senior Residence, and Del Manor, these residences will assist in coordinating transportation for those who attend these Masses. However, Fr. Pat wishes to extend the invitation to all seniors in the parish. It is our hope family members might assist in bringing seniors to the lunch. In order to prepare for numbers, a sign-up sheet will be available after each weekend Mass, or kindly RSVP to parish office. There is no fee for this event.

Children's Christmas Choir

Children of the parish, wishing to sing in a Children's Christmas Choir at the 9:30a.m. Mass on Christmas Day are welcome to add their names and contact information to the sign-up sheet in the lobby. Rehearsals will be held Saturdays 11:00 a.m. – Noon in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Those who sign-up will be contacted with more information from the music leaders.

Day of Confessions

The archdiocese has asked all churches to hold a day of Confessions on Thursday, Dec. 17th, at various times of the day, to allow parishioners the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Fr. Pat has set the following schedule for St. Edward's Parish:

7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Friday, December 4th

First Friday Holy Hour, Benediction and Mass

Join us on Friday, Dec. 4th, for First Friday Holy Hour (6:30 – 7:30p.m.), followed by Mass at 7:30p.m. All are welcome.