

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Pastor's Christmas Message

I am sometimes called to hospitals in the middle of the night. It is something I respond to with great haste and humility, though I am never sure what will await me. No matter the situation, it is always a profound privilege and blessing to meet people in times of need. They are a gift to me as well.

A few years ago I arrived to baptize a newborn child at risk of dying. His mother, weak from the delivery, and still in her bed, asked that her bed be wheeled directly into the intensive care unit so she could be close to her newborn son and present for his Baptism. Once her bed was positioned closer to his incubator, she sat up and reached into the incubator and took his hand in hers as we celebrated his Baptism. I was struck by the peace and serenity on her face as she tenderly looked into his eyes and studied his every move. The nurses also paused in prayer for this tiny child, only one hour old and yet already making a difference in the world! He had managed to touch our hearts and to challenge our faith. His mother seemed to be pondering not only her new child but the meaning of her own life now that he had entered it.

A newborn child is always something to behold, a marvel of creation, a miracle, an experience to treasure and a great mystery. This mystery often draws us closer to God as we contemplate the meaning of our lives as well. Each life is a miracle and demands to be pondered in the context of our relationship with God and one another.

As we come to another celebration of Christmas, we are once again challenged by the birth of a Child at Bethlehem. The miracle of God entering the world as a child is not inseparable from who we are and why we have been created as well. In this mystery of love we are definitely linked together with Christ in God's divine plan and purpose for the world that began on that first Christmas night.

Not long ago, I recall hearing a story about how much Pope John Paul II particularly loved celebrating Christmas Mass. As a young priest and bishop in Poland, during times the local church was being persecuted, he would sometimes even preach outside the cathedral in the open air. He encouraged the people to never stop pondering the meaning of their lives within the context of the Child-Jesus at Bethlehem. In one particular homily he offered the following insight:

"Like those who came first, we come to contemplate and to bow down and acknowledge God in the mystery of the Incarnation; and when we come we find ourselves.

Contemporary people in this last quarter of the twentieth century, whose human dignity has been ignored and infringed in so many ways, come to Christ's stable in Bethlehem to ask who they are and what they are in the world, bringing with them their existential anxiety. And when they come to Bethlehem, like each of us they find the reply in the manger on the straw. "I have given them power to become children of God." This small, weak infant, who was born and forced to stay outside the town in a stable, has given this power and he still gives it to us who live in the twentieth century and whose dignity and essence have been so compromised that we no longer really understand that we were made in the image and likeness of God. However, his truth alone gives mystery to our human existence, and only in this truth do we find the answer to the question of who we are and why we are alive"

(Fr. Karol Wojtyla, Wawel Cathedral, 25 December 1976)

As we celebrate this wonderful season of Christmas, I pray it inspires your faith, provides you hope, and brings you closer to God. Let us remember one another in prayer. Merry Christmas!

Fr. Pat



Mass Intentions

Monday, December 26th, 2016

8:30 a.m. Steve & Grace Amoroso – 50th Wedding Anniversary

Tuesday, December 27th, 2016

8:30 a.m. +Madeline Villeneuve

Wednesday, December 28th, 2016

8:30 a.m. + Agatha Kim

Thursday, December 29th, 2016 Multi-intention

8:30 a.m. + Lina Soares

Friday, December 30th, 2016

8:30 a. m. + Helen Vida

Saturday, December 31st, 2016

4:30 p.m. Medina and Peredo Families

Sunday, January 1st, 2017

8:00 a.m. + Zsuzsanna Sutka

9:30 a.m. Special Intention of the Wong Family

11:00 a.m. + Deceased members of the Mazzitelli Family

Thank you !

I wish to thank the Choirs, the Lectors, the Eucharistic Ministers, Altar-Servers, Ushers, Sacristans, and all

who assisted at our Christmas Masses. A special thank you to Maria Amodio for the great work in decorating the Church.

Thank you to all the children participating in the Nativity Pageant and a special thank you to Connie Marsh who helped to organize it.

St. Edward the Confessor Church – Choral Scholarships

A special scholarship fund has been set up for high school students in music studies who would like to share their gift of music at Sunday Mass.

Looking for – One female and one male singer

Skills – A strong singer with a previous choral experience, good sight-reading skills and a voice that blends.

Duties – Scholars are expected to exhibit strong commitment to choir duties and to play a positive and enthusiastic role in the work of the choir. Thursday rehearsals, 7:30 – 8:45 p.m. Sunday Mass: 11 a.m. (brief rehearsal, prior, at 10:30 a.m.). Some extra rehearsals required throughout the church year for liturgical feasts (Christmas, Holy Week and Easter). Open to cantering at other masses as well.

Repertoire – we sing a variety of the best sacred music from the Renaissance to Contemporary.

Renumeration – Scholarship of \$1000 per liturgical year (September to June)

Audition – contact the Director of Music, Marc Michalak at: marcfmichalak@gmail.com to arrange an audition.

For further information, contact the Pastor, Fr. Patrick O’Dea, at: frpatodea@yahoo.com

Band of Christian Brothers Men’s Conference

On **February 18th** join **Fr. Larry Richards** and **Archbishop of Montreal Christian Lépine** for Serviam Ministries’ 2nd annual **Band of Christian Brothers Men’s Conference** at Canada Christian College in Toronto. The theme is “Step Up”. The day will strengthen and challenge men to become the man God created them to be. Mass, Adoration and Confession will take place.

Special Father/Son rates available. All info and tickets: <https://www.serviamministries.com/events/step-up/>, info@ServiamMinistries.com or 1-888-522-2070.

Christmas Eve – Saturday, December 24th
4:30 p.m., 7:00 p.m., and 12:00 Midnight

Christmas Day – Sunday, December 25th
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

New Year’s Eve – Saturday, December 31st
4:30 p.m.

New Year’s Day – Sunday January 1st
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

For Current and New Ministers to the Sick

Office of Formation for Discipleship will be offering the Lay Pastoral Visitors Training beginning on January 11, 2017. This training is designed to prepare lay persons to provide pastoral visits and/or bring Holy Communion to the sick and shut-ins of our parish communities. Participants are required to attend all 6 days. New and seasoned volunteers are welcome to attend. This training will be held at **St. Edward the Confessor Parish, North York on Wednesdays January 11, 18, 25, February 1, 8 & 15, 2017 – 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm.** There is no cost to attend, however registration is required. For further information, visit: <https://www.archtoronto.org/our-catholic-faith/programs-and-workshops> or call (416) 934-3400 ext.523

New Offertory Envelopes

For those who have not yet picked up the new offertory envelopes for 2017, please do so in order that you can start using them in January. Thank you

Parish Office Christmas Hours

Office Closed: Monday, December 26th
Tuesday, December 27th

Daily Mass will be held as usual (8:30 a.m.)



Christmas & New Year Schedule