

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 7, 2008



Isaiah 40:1-5

- ❖ There was a time of retribution and punishment, but now is the time for reconciliation. God comes to me in mercy and tenderness.
- ❖ How can I prepare the way for the Lord to enter more into my life?
- ❖ Is there “uneven ground” or “rough places” in my life, where I don’t really want to let God in? Listen to the first couple of sentences again: God comes to me in mercy and tenderness.



MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 8TH

Monday	7:00 p.m.	Liturgy of the Word (Immaculate Conception of Mary)
Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Advent Evening Prayer
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Bert Kelly by Elaine Sloan
Saturday	7:00 p.m.	Gerry Lance by Mary & Family
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	June Williams by Anthony & Family; Jeanne Munro by the CWG
	11:00 a.m.	Franz Saladin by the Flamenco Family

WEEKEND COLLECTIONS: \$2,629.75 Thank you!



We have begun the Advent Season...

As Church, we are not in a hurry to get to Christmas. In fact, we want to prepare for it well. We do that by means of the Advent Season. That is tough, but necessary. If we want to maintain the Christian meaning of Christmas, then we need to reflect on what Christ came for in the first place and for which he, really, still needs to come very much: for the renewal of a broken and wounded world. Advent has a lot to do with getting in touch with that dream of God, as articulated by the prophets of the Old Testament, and with making that dream our own.

WOW! That was a great Advent Event!

If the purpose of the Advent Season is to get us ready for Christmas, the Advent Season itself has to be prepared for too. That is what we did at, what has come to be known as, *The Advent Event* that took place on Saturday afternoon before the first Sunday of Advent. A great number of parishioners of all ages engaged in several activities that had to do with Advent: making the Advent wreaths for the church and for our homes; preparing the symbols for the Jesse Tree and trying to find in the Bible what these symbols refer to; sorting out what steps are part of the straight path for the Lord; taking a closer look at what the Advent banners are all about - and then holding our breath when we saw Wayne climbing the ladder to put up those banners; having an Advent bingo game; doing some Advent singing; blessing the Advent wreaths etc. It all came to a fitting end with a shared chilli supper in the rectory, but there were so many participants that not all could find a place in the rectory and so had to eat their delicious supper in the church hall.

The entire adventure was put together by Paula Nason and Julie Cool and their associates. And as for the chilli supper... that was prepared at home by several participants and brought to the church to be enjoyed by us all; salads and desserts were all part of it too! To the organizers, the workers, and all the participants: many thanks!! From reactions received, the whole exercise was thought to be very enjoyable, both informative and formative of the faith we cherish, and really “community-building”. It was not just *nice for the kids*; we all enjoyed it!

What is the point of those *dead branches* at the entrance?

You cannot miss them. You find them at the entrance of the church, exactly where our Christmas tree will be. But we are not there yet. At this point it is our Advent Tree, normally identified as the **Jesse Tree**. It takes its inspiration from what the prophet Isaiah says: “*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest on him...*” (Isaiah 11.1-2) Jesus is the branch from the stump of Jesse. The branches are decorated with symbols that represent Jesus’ ancestors – many women and men who became carriers of the great story of God-with-us. That is why you could call it the family tree of Jesus. We Christians are the inheritors of this story – offshoots from the stump of Jesse.

It may also be a good occasion to think about our own family tree. Who are the ancestors who shaped our family and its way of life? Think about your parents, grandparents, other older family members and friends. How did they lead you to be the “person of faith” you are today?

Monday, December 8: *Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary*

Mary is one of the principal *Advent* figures. We honour her and let ourselves be inspired by her so that she may teach us to become *Advent People*. That is what we will do with a special service this **Monday evening, December 8, at 7:00 p.m.** It will be a *Liturgy of the Word* as outlined in the book that the CCCB (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops) composed for that purpose. NOTE: This service will last about half an hour.

Advent Evening Prayer: This Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

The Church’s repertoire of worship services is quite extensive. It also includes the Church’s *Evening Prayer*. Its basic make-up is as follows:

- **The Light Service.** It has its origin in a Jewish home ritual of pre-Christian times: the lighting of the lamps on Sabbath eve. For us Christians, Christ is the “*Light of the World*”; something captured in the lighting of the Easter Candle. As daylight fades, we light the Easter Candle and sing our praise to Christ as the Light of the World. And we give God thanks for the gift of light, above all for Jesus Christ, our Light.
- **Psalmody.** We have recourse to the treasure of the psalms; a real school of prayer.
- **The Canticle of Mary and Intercession.** We follow the lead of Mary as we sing our praises to the God we have come to know in the history of Israel and, above all, in Jesus Christ. We call upon the Lord and intercede for those in need in our world.
- **The Lord’s Prayer and Blessing.** This is the way the prayer is concluded.

None of this is done in a hurry. Periods of silence are effective in leading us deeper into the prayer.

Advent Penitential Service: Tuesday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m.

There are several ways of preparing for Christmas during the Advent Season. One of them is the *Advent Penitential Service*. That service has to do with acknowledging before God our half-hearted acceptance and following of Jesus, our sinfulness. We ourselves stand in need of what Jesus Christ came for: to give us new life, to set us free from our captivities, to forgive us our sinfulness. We bring that need before God, trusting that God in his compassion will grace us with his Forgiveness. That is the basic orientation of the communal Penitential Service, to be held **Tuesday, December 16, at 7:00 p.m.**

“Individual” Confessions...

The communal celebration (mentioned above) does not exclude the possibility or desirability - or sometimes the need - of wanting to celebrate the same saving mystery in a more personal and individual way in individual confession. The one does not cancel out the other; and that goes both ways.

Some specific time slots are set aside for that, in the hope that everyone can be accommodated who wants to celebrate God’s Forgiveness in individual confession.

Tuesday, December 16: after Penitential Service

Thursday, December 18: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 20: 11:00 to NOON

NOTE: Anyone wanting (or needing) to go to confession can *approach the priest at any time.*

It matters what we sing: The Three Comings of Christ

After we have lit the *Advent* candle, at the beginning of Mass we sing: **Kyrie eleison** (Greek for 'Lord have mercy'). The verses that go with it are very important. They help us focus on the three-fold coming of Christ; a basic tenet of the Christian faith. There is the **first** coming of Christ, which took place some 2000 years ago and which we celebrate at Christmas; there is the **present** coming of Christ, which in faith we are privileged to experience every time the Word of God is proclaimed and a sacrament is celebrated. And finally, there is Christ's **future** coming in glory, which in joy-filled hope we look forward to.



MASS SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS:

That is a tough one to handle. We discussed it again (like last year) at the Liturgy Committee meeting. And we plan to have the same Mass Schedule for Christmas as last year. What is the issue some may wonder? With the introduction of Christmas Eve Masses, the actual Midnight Mass has come under some pressure. Of all the Christmas Masses it is the least attended. That is not only true of us here. When you ask around "Should we have Midnight Mass?" the answer from most is "Yes". But then when you ask "Do you go to Midnight Mass?" the answer of an increasing number is "We go to an earlier Mass or on Christmas morning."



In light of that we have decided on the following Christmas Mass schedule:

Christmas Eve, December 24: 7:00 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.

Christmas Day, December 25: 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

While this may inconvenience some, we hope all will find a place in the four Christmas Masses we do have.



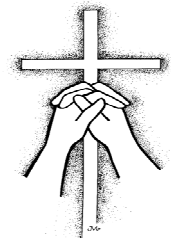
PPC: Monday, December 8th after Liturgy of the Word (Immaculate Conception of Mary).

Wardens: Tuesday, December 9th at 7:30 p.m.

The PPC and the Wardens will be complete by January 1st...

Teresa Clarke, Ann Hampel and Greg Minifie are the new members on the **Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)**. Mary Baskin, Gilles Laroche and Clinton McCrank are the new **Wardens**. We thank each and all of them for their willingness to serve our parish in this capacity. We also express our sincere thanks to the outgoing **PPC** members (Jean-François Landry, Maria MacNaughton and Rosemary Smith) and to the outgoing **Wardens** (Phyllis Allen, Wilf Scott and Ken Smith) for their gracious contribution to the life of our parish.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Kindly remember Dave McCormick, Tony Sciampane, Corrie Welch, Pat Norlock, Bonnie Brennan and their families in your prayers.



PRAYERS & SYMPATHY: Our prayers and sympathies are extended to the Cameron, Groleau, and Irish families on the loss of Louise.

Visit our Website: www.stmarkparish.ca

Bulletin Design & Website Content/Design by: *Catherine LeGuerrier*

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