

# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## December 6, 2009



Luke 3:1--6

- The Gospel positions John the Baptist in the history of his time, sign-posting the date of God's intervention in human history. It was not a one-off intervention; it continues through every one who works to prepare the way of the Lord.
- My time is now, and John's path is laid out for me. How am I responding? Have I accepted this "way"?



### MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.	
Friday	9:00 a.m.	
Saturday	7:00 p.m.	Carolyn Greenlaw by Claire Rochford Gerry Lance by Mary & Family
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	June Williams by Anthony & Family Bernie Haucke by Don & Lana Charron
	11:00 a.m.	Dick Henderson by Gloria & Family

**WEEKEND COLLECTIONS:**     \$ 2,728.55     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 being realistic about the brokenness and woundedness of our world and, in the face of it, with getting in touch with that promise of God to make our world new, as articulated by the prophets of the Old Testament. In between his two comings, the one in Bethlehem 2000 years ago and his coming in glory, Christ counts very much on us who are his Spirit-empowered hands and feet.

### 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. It was part of the preparation program for our Confirmation and First Communion candidates. Many of them were there with their parents, and some additional parishioners participated as well. That sort of mix is great! What did we do? A number of *Advent* things: 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; getting the Giving Tree in shape; taking a closer look at what the *Advent* banners for the church are all about; having an *Advent* Bingo game; doing some *Advent* singing; blessing the *Advent* wreaths etc. It all came to a fitting end with a shared chili supper served in the rectory. That chili supper 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! We got it all done just in time before the 7:00 p.m. *Advent* Mass so that many of the *Advent* Event people could participate in it.

Naturally, an event like that does not “just happen”. It takes a fair bit of organizing and preparing; it takes a fair bit of work! But it is worth it in the end. So to all the organizers, the workers, the food-providers and the food-servers, and all the participants: many thanks! One of the younger participants thought that “*this is the best church day ever!*” 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!

### **Another step in preparing for Confirmation and First Communion: Participation in the *Guignolée* this Sunday afternoon**

Our Bishop urges us all to move ever so slowly from a narrow preparation for the sacraments towards formation to the Christian life. That is not a matter of forgetting to prepare for the sacraments, but to place that preparation in the larger context of exposure to and participation in church life. That makes a lot of sense, because apart from that broader church life Confirmation and First Communion don't amount to much, if to anything at all.

Part of that broader church life is the annual *Guignolée* which is organized by St. Vincent de Paul Society and which will be held this Sunday afternoon. It consists in going door to door to collect food and money which, in turn, will benefit the less fortunate in our area. It starts after the 11:00 a.m. Mass with a light lunch in our church basement and it is followed with a free dinner at the Knights of Columbus Hall when all is done. It is natural that our Confirmation and First Communion candidates want to get a taste for this aspect of church life too. It all fits nicely together.

### **This Tuesday, 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. There is no one like Mary who can show us what it is to be a disciple of Jesus. Pope Paul VI called her “the most prominent disciple of Jesus”. Since she is so important to us as Christians, we would not want to let this feast of Mary go by without a special service devoted to her. The format of this service is some reflections on Mary interspersed with some Marian hymns from our hymnal. The service begins at **7:00 p.m.** and will take about 35 minutes.

### **Advent Penitential Service: Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m.**

There are several ways of observing the *Advent* Season and of preparing for Christmas. Coming together as a parish community to reflect on how much we as individuals and as a parish community stand in need of what God offers us in Jesus Christ is one of them; and it is a very healthy one. In the Bible and in several prayers of the Church we are called ‘a sinful people’. That is not meant as a put-down. Rather, it is a way of saying that without the tender mercy of our God and without the forgiveness of our sins we cannot be the kind of people God wants us to be. In this case, God's tender mercy and God's forgiveness are not in question. They are “a *given*”. It is beautifully expressed in the words of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist:

*“By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

What needs attention is our readiness to acknowledge our need for that mercy and forgiveness from God. None of us can do without it. To bring that in focus is the purpose of the communal **Advent Penitential Service** which we will have on Tuesday, December 15, 7:00 p.m.

### **“Individual” Confessions...**

The communal celebration (mentioned above) does not exclude the possibility or desirability – nor does it take the place – of celebrating the saving mystery of God's Forgiveness in a more personal and individual way in individual confession. That is why we make some time slots available for that purpose:



**Tuesday, December 15: after Penitential Service**  
**Thursday, December 17: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Saturday, December 19: 11:00 to Noon**  
**Monday, December 21: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.**

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



### **MASS SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS:**

The Liturgy Committee has looked again at the Mass Schedule for Christmas for this year. The same schedule will be in place as what we have had the last two years:

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

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

No Midnight Mass at Midnight? That used to be **the** Mass for most some years ago. But things have shifted so much that, of all the Christmas Masses, it was the least attended. That is everywhere. Yes, 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."

The schedule indicated above may inconvenience some. Still, we hope that all will find a place in the four Christmas Masses we do have.

### **SUNDAY PRAISE AND WORSHIP NIGHT:**

All are welcome to join us this evening before the Holy Tabernacle in this event that will feature contemporary praise and worship music led by our own Mitch LeGuerrier and band. **This Sunday evening; it begins at 7:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m.** Let's raise the roof for our Lord and Saviour!

### **The PPC and the Wardens will be complete by January 1<sup>st</sup>**

The three members of the **Parish Pastoral Council** whose first three-year term will expire at the end of the month have indicated their readiness to accept a second three-year term: Julie Cool, Bob Flynn, and Lynn LeGuerrier. For the **Wardens**, Betty Johnston is ready to accept a second three-year term and André Sirois has been acclaimed to take the place of Mary Baskin who has resigned from the **Wardens** for personal reasons. Our sincere thanks to Mary for her service to our parish; before becoming a Warden Mary served the Wardens as Secretary for many years. Our appreciation to Betty and André and to Julie, Bob, and Lynne for their willingness to serve our parish either as Warden or as member of the Pastoral Council.

**MEETING: CWG POT LUCK SUPPER on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:45 p.m.** Please bring your favourite dish along with a small wrapped gift to share. A short meeting will follow. All CWG members welcome!

**DIOCESAN FAITH FORMATION:** Discernment as a way of life. Often in our spiritual journeys we seek to know God's will. There are four pre-conditions that prepare one's heart to discern wisely. Properly framing your discernment question is the next important step. Then praying daily with the question and listening. Over time, God will indicate through signs (7) that help the mature Christian confirm in faith that a spiritual direction has emerged. Discernment is a wonderful gift of the Spirit that can bring such peace and harmony into our daily lives.

**When:** Saturday, December 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** St. John the Apostle Parish, 2340 Baseline Road, Ottawa

**Who:** Presenter Sister Rosemary O'Toole, CSJ has been a spiritual director at The Upper Room Home of Prayer for 25 years. **Cost:** \$15/please bring a lunch.

Pre-registration required: ([abrown@ArchOttawa.ca](mailto:abrown@ArchOttawa.ca)); (613 738-5025, ext. 217).

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