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TRULY REJOICE

Today we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday. "Gaudete" is a Latin word, meaning "rejoice." The Christian steward should be characterized by a spirit of rejoicing.

Our First Reading, from Isaiah, expresses a fitting motto for us. "I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul." It is God Who is the source of our joy and contentment - not things or achievements or comfort, but our relationship with God.

This is why stewards can share so freely of their time, talents and material possessions - because ultimately, we are not attached to these things. We recognize them as good gifts from our loving Father, but we are attached to the Giver of the gifts, not the gifts themselves. This allows for great freedom in life and the capacity for great joy in the Lord.

We can become like John the Baptist, in today's Gospel passage from the Book of John. We read this description of the prophet: "He came for testimony, to testify to the light... He was not the light but came to testify to the light." This is our calling too - to testify to the Light, our wonderful Savior - by the way we make use of the time, talent and treasure He has entrusted to our care.

When God Himself is the source of our joy, it cannot be taken away from us. There is still time, this Advent season, to clear away any "clutter" in our lives that may take our focus away from Him. Let us strive to detach from any of these things so that we can be free to truly rejoice in God on Christmas Day.
reflections@catholicsteward.com

Pastor

Rev. Father Christopher Gerard Gillen P.P.
Diocesan Social Justice Office Rep.
Member of Ontario Bishops' Social Affairs Commission.
Spiritual Chaplain to Diocesan D&P
Spiritual Director to Acts Retreat Ministry Men & Women.
Intern to Mental Health/ Addiction Counselling Hamilton.

Sunday Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm Sunday 10:00 am

Weekday Masses

See Schedule on the inside of the bulletin

In Office Hours

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Administrative Assistant

Sandy Johnson

Financial Recorder

Tracy Piggott

Reconciliation/Confessions

By Appointment Only

Requesting Sacraments

Must be registered and practicing
Call office for details

St Martin School

Phone 905-957-3032

Cemetery

Ron Roscovich at 905-386-0648

Parish Organizations

Catholic Women's League
President - Carolyn Vaughan

Knights of Columbus

Grand Knight - Pierre Paradis
koc.16421@gmail.com

Facility Maintenance

Tom Diletti - tom.diletti@gmail.com

Parish Groups

Children's Liturgy. Youth Ministry
West Lincoln Loaf of Bread
Parish Events Group
Parish Financial Council
Responsible Faith Ministry
ACTS Retreat Teams

Diocese of St. Catharines

Bishop of the Diocese

Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.

Diocesan Website: www.saintcd.com

St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church



YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

December 8, 2020- December 8, 2021

166 West Street, P.O. Box 74

Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0

Telephone: 289-956-0221

Email: st.martins@cogeco.ca

www.stmartinsparish.com

December 13, 2020 Year B

The 3rd Sunday of Advent

Dec 13, 2020

The 3rd Sunday of Advent - Year B

MASS TIMES, INTENTIONS, PARISH CALENDAR

Mon	Dec 14	9:00 am	For the special intentions of Kathy Gallant and her sons	by Ray & Sharon Richard
Tues	Dec 15	9:00 am	For the special intentions of Bob Hignett	by Vern & Josie Dell
		6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Diocesan Council for Development and Peace Zoom Meeting	Fr Christopher
Wed	Dec 16	9:00 am	For the special intentions of the Carbonara Family	by Vern & Josie Dell
		10:30 am - 5:00 pm	Gethsemane Center Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	
			Father Christopher celebrant. Confessions and Counselling if required.	
		7:00 pm- 7:30 pm	Praise and Worship in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament/Benediction to follow.	
Thurs	Dec 17	9:00 am	+Aninna Cartaginense	by Frank & Cathy Cartaginense
Fri	Dec 18	9:00 am	+Don Fodero	by Frank & Cathy Cartaginense
		10:30 am - 2:00 pm	Pastoral home Visits for those who called.	Fr. Christopher
		7:30 pm - 9:30 pm	Praise and Worship Gethsemane Centre Wellandport - Register if attending	Fr. Christopher
		7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Hamilton Drug and Rehabilitation Zoom Meeting	Fr. Christopher
Sat	Dec 19	8:40 am - 10:15 am	That Man is You Zoom Meeting - Mississauga	Fr. Christopher
Sat	Dec 19		The 4th Sunday of Advent	
		4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Sacramental Confession. Call the office prior to coming.	
		5:00 pm	Pro Populo Dei - For the special intentions of St. Martin's Parish Family	
Sun	Dec 20	10:00 am	For the special intentions of the Dell family	by Vern & Josie Dell

ONLINE EUCHARIST

Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria

Sunday Mass live stream at 11:30 am. Visit the diocesan website for viewing:
www.saintcd.com or on YouTube

St. Joseph's Parish Grimsby.

Follow on Face Book or their website:
Stjosephgrimsby.ca

Vision TV: Sun - 8:00 am
Mon - Fri - 8:00 am & 12:00 pm
Sat - 8:00 am & 9:30 am

Salt + Light: Sun - 11:00 am & 10:30 pm
Mon - Sat - 6:30 am, 11:00 am,
3:00 pm, 10:30 pm

yesTV: Sun - 10:30 am
Mon - Sat - 1:00 pm

Internet : www.dailytvmass.com
www.youtube.com/dailytvmass

RELIGIOUS CHRISTMAS CARDS

Religious Christmas Cards are available this year through the Knights of Columbus. If interested please call Ron Roscovich at:
905-386-0648

E-TRANSFERS

These transfers are often referred to as **Interac e-Transfers** and done through your online banking, website or app. To transfer funds to St. Martin Parish e-Transfer to:
st.martinsdonation@gmail.com

Please do not enter a security question and answer. You will be informed that your transfer to "The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation" has been completed.

This is a first for us, so bear with us as we begin this new way of accepting tithe/stewardship/donations. We thank you for your patience and generosity during this pandemic.

PASTORAL HOME VISITS

Many remain uncomfortable with going to Vigil Mass Saturday and Sunday Mass. Again, we invite you to attend weekday Masses as the numbers attending are very low. If you cannot come and still desire a pastoral visit I'm more than available to bring you Holy Communion, Anointing and sacramental Confession.

Throughout this pandemic I've also shared the Good News with many of you on the phone. Please do call the parish office to setup a home visit. Remember, you are not alone. Connection and prayer is only a phone call away.

REGISTRATION FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

As we begin to fill up our spaces for Christmas Masses it is important that you also call the office if you've changed your mind. Sickness and other challenges might present themselves. Not showing up means we might be turning someone away. Thank you.

"VIRTUAL" CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Our Children's Liturgy, under the direction of Mrs. Noseworthy is posting videos every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Thank you

COVID-19 AND PARISH STEWARDSHIP

While the situation of COVID-19 continues to develop in our lives and communities, it is increasingly evident that the pandemic has had, and will continue to have for some time to come, a far reaching impact on all of us. We appeal to your generosity as we need the weekly stewardship of one and all, to maintain our financial commitments. A special thank you to those who send in their weekly/monthly stewardship. Also, to those who have begun with E-Transfers. We encourage others to be regular with their presence and stewardship.

CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS

Dec 22 - Normal Hours
Dec 24 - Closed
Dec 29 - Normal Hours
Dec 31 - Closed
Jan 5 - Normal Hours

STEWARDSHIP ENVELOPES 2021

Stewardship/Offertory envelopes are available in numerical order on the table in the center of the crying room. We ask that you enter by the church entrance near the confessional room and exit by the main foyer. Please exercise social distance and wait until other people have moved on. Please check that your name and address are correct. If you did not use envelopes last year and wish to begin this year or if you have changed your address, please come to the office during the week. We ask you not to use old Church envelopes from previous years. If you have not used envelopes for a few years your number may have been assigned to someone else.

If you would still like your box of envelopes and are not attending please contact the office to arrange a pick up time .

GENTLE REMINDERS

Masks MUST be worn in Church at ALL times. The only time you take your mask off briefly is at Holy Communion. Some also need to replace their mask after consuming the Eucharist, as you cannot leave the church building holding your mask. Please arrive early. We discontinued locking the doors as others protested. Yet, we have not turned others away. Please do not place your offering before Mass, please give after Mass.

With our limit of 30% every space is precious and needs to be accounted for. That will mean some inconvenience on your part. Sitting where you are placed - and move into the pew as to allow others to sit without having close contact with you.

Pandemic fatigue has set in for all of us. Please help all of us by being co-operative, charitable and kind. Thank you kindly.

REGISTRATION FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Advent calls us to be alert, ready. We begin early plans and preparation as we invite you to register for the Christmas Masses. Christmas is a time where a lot of our families and friends join us to celebrate the birth of Christ. That is a joyful and happiest occasion for each of us to get together to worship the gift of Love that God shares with us. Given the situation of COVID-19, we need to limit the numbers and we need to plan for the masses. We want to try to give as many chances for the people and your registration will greatly help in our planning.

Even though it is a pandemic, let us not forget that we need God in our lives and only God can lead us and guide us and give us the strength to face any situations. The church will be disinfected after every Mass. Strict protocols are in place to assure your safety.

The pandemic has caused financial difficulty for a lot of families, young people at colleges or universities, some struggling with terminal illness, seniors and municipal and provincial businesses. The church is not an exception. I invite all those who can do a little more to support our parish. Currently, less than half of our members have supported us throughout the pandemic. Let's act together for a just recovery that includes all. Thank you for your generosity and solidarity.

There will not be an official collection to avoid the interaction between people but we invite you to leave your offering in the basket at the foyer. I hope you will show your generosity as we celebrate the love of God being shared with you and your family.

If there is a need, more Masses will be added. Therefore, we must receive early registration from you by December 13, 2020. This Sunday is the deadline. Please register!

Here is our proposed schedule.

- Christmas Eve Dec 24
 - Vigil Mass 5:00pm.
 - Anticipated Midnight Mass 10:30 pm
- Christmas Day December 25
 - 10:00 am.

Parish Office: Phone: (289) 956-0221
Email: st.martins@cogeco.ca
Website: <http://www.stmartinsparish.com>

CHRISTMAS PASTORAL GREETINGS

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined...for a child has been born for us." (Isaiah 9:2, 6a)

My dear friends:)

I find it appropriate on this Gaudete (Rejoice the Lord is near) Sunday, to present my Christmas message to all of you with the use of these opening words from the prophet Isaiah, words which open us up to the knowing that darkness will never prevail when we live in the light. And during these unprecedented times in the history of the world where a virus has threatened all of us so deeply to the roots of our being, words of assurance and instances of light are truly welcomed. And it is with this in mind where I sit in my chapel before the Blessed Sacrament - I share with you my message of hope and my blessings to you and your families as this season unfolds.

None of us will ever forget 2020! Covid-19 has dramatically altered everyone's daily life and powerfully exposed the vulnerability that all humans share. This period has forced us to reassess a lot of things. The temptation to return to the past is something that comes naturally to us, but we must always be open to Christ's voice in the present. For Christians, postponing our mission is never a legitimate option; faith cannot be quarantined. It has to be lived in the circumstances of the time.

I was particularly touched by what Pope Francis has written in his new book: Let us Dream. "Let us begin anew from the numerous examples of generous, freely-given love, which in these months have shown us how much closeness, care, and sacrifice are needed to nourish fraternity and civil coexistence. In this way, we will emerge from this crisis stronger."

Christmas for many of us could possibly be very different this year. Family gatherings may not be happening as in days gone by. The annual pilgrimage to the church on Christmas Eve may or may not take place, depending on what decisions

different communities of faith take on in-person worship. Your children or grandchildren may not have the opportunity of sitting on Santa's knee as you travel to the local mall and see the empty chair where the jolly fellow used to sit. Travel will be different. Christmas pageants may be non-existent. Annual choir concerts will be silent. Things will change and there will be a strangeness to it all, a strangeness which will strike to the very heart of our spirits. But there's something which we always need to keep in mind – the child in Bethlehem will burst into our lives once again. And in these times of darkness, as Leonard Cohen stated, "There's a crack in everything and that's how the light gets in." And yes, Jesus is our light and will break through once again.

Advent is about breaking through and letting in the light, and thanks be to God! If ever there was a season that captured the "mood" of the world in its context, it's Advent 2020. We long for what we believe is yet to come, reflecting upon the hope, peace, joy, and love we know in Jesus Christ, perhaps *especially* because those gifts have seemed to be in shorter-than-usual supply this year. Whether we await divine intervention, or simply the rollout of an effective vaccine, we wait with expectant hope. This is a time to reflect on our needs and the coming of the light that Jesus brings to our world at Christmas.

My hope for all of you is that Christmas will come into your world with a renewed feeling of peace and love and joy and may the Christ-child be born into your hearts once again. My deepest blessings to all of you and may the light of the stable of Bethlehem be found in your life.

Be safe - be in touch ~ be assured that I am holding you in prayer and in our daily celebration of the Eucharist.

Yours with love and deep gratitude,
Christopher +
Parish Priest
December 13, 2020.

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP - Christmas 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

"Do not be afraid: for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Christ, the Lord" (Luke 2:10)

The Angel of the Lord said these words to the shepherds at the first Christmas. They are just as meaningful today as they were over two thousand years ago. At this moment we are in the midst of a pandemic. We need some 'good news'.

There is no question that Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact on our world and on our lives. Our Christmas celebrations will be very different this year. Since extended families and friends will not be able to gather, many traditions will need to be altered. This can all be very troubling.

The good news is the Covid-19 cannot stop Christmas! We need not allow our fears and anxiety to rob us of the joy and peace that we celebrate on this feast.

If our temporal activities are significantly restricted this year, perhaps God is giving us an opportunity to contemplate the spiritual meaning of the birth of our Saviour.

In the Gospel of St. John, we are told that *"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life"* (John 3:16). This radical love of God is the central theme of Christmas.

We need not worry or be afraid because God will never stop loving and caring for us. Like Our Blessed Mother Mary, all we need to do is trust in that love and be filled with joy.

This year, as we contemplate the Holy Family at Christmas, consider the tranquility that filled the manger scene despite the chaos of the world around them. They were in the presence of Divine Love and this brought them hope and peace.

So be not afraid and trust in God's love for you. This is indeed the 'good news' that we need at this time!

May you have a blessed Christmas and a grace-filled New Year.

Yours sincerely in Christ
Bishop Gerard P Bergie