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FOCUS AND PREPARE

We serve a merciful and patient God. In His kindness, He warns us that we will be called to make an account one day for the way in which we made use of the gifts He has given us.

The most precious gift He has given us is His own Son, Whose birth we are preparing to celebrate.

St. Peter describes the loving kindness of the Father in our Second Reading today, saying God "is patient with you, not wishing that anyone should perish but that all should come to repentance." Yet, in the same passage we receive this warning: "The Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar... and the earth and everything on it will be found out."

How are we to assimilate these two truths - the merciful love of God and the responsibility that comes with the privilege of living as His disciple? St. Peter tells us we should conduct ourselves "in holiness and devotion." Indeed, this is the goal of our Advent "reset" - to return to living lives focused on Christ, in gratitude for all He has done for us.

In our Gospel passage from Mark, John the Baptist instructs us to "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." We must make good use of the gift of time we have been given this Advent season. Let's be sure to get to Confession, prioritize a daily reading of the Scriptures, and reach out to someone in need with a word of comfort or an act of service.

In this way, we will honor both the mercy and justice of our God, and we will be prepared to celebrate the birth of Christ and give account for all His gifts to us.

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
Saturday 4:00 pm - 4:30 pm

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



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December 6, 2020
Year B
The 2nd Sunday of Advent

Dec 6, 2020

The 2nd Sunday of Advent - Year B

MASS TIMES, INTENTIONS, PARISH CALENDAR

Mon	Dec 7	9:00 am	Health and Healing for Fr. Brian Bevan + Tony Passero (Father Rico's Father)	by Marg & Dick Van Geest by Fr Christopher G Gillen
Tues	Dec 8	9:00 am	+ Theresa Cornak	by Caroline & Andrew Steger
Wed	Dec 9	9:00 am	+Don Palma	by Caroline & Andrew Steger
		10:30 am	- 5:00 pm - Gethsemane Center Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	
			Father Christopher celebrant. Confessions and Counselling if required.	
Thurs	Dec 10	9:00 am	For the special intentions of Fr. Christopher	by Martha Devlin
Fri	Dec 11	9:00 am	For the special intentions of Maria Biancaniello	by Vern & Josie Dell
		7:30 pm	- 9:30 pm Praise and Worship Gethsemane Centre Wellandport - Register if attending	
		7:00 pm	- 8:00 pm Hamilton Drug and Rehabilitation Zoom Meeting	Father Christopher
Sat	Dec 12	The 3rd Sunday of Advent		
		4:00 pm	- 4:30 pm Sacramental Confession. Call the office prior to coming.	
		5:00 pm	+Escolastica & Jacinto Melo & Jose Cordeiro	by Mr & Mrs Melo
Sun	Dec 13	10:00 am	Pro Populo Dei - For the special intentions of St. Martin's Parish Family	

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.

SUNDAY MISSALS 2021

Sunday Missals have finally arrived. There was a delay of course due to COVID-19. If you desire to donate, you are welcome to do so, but it's not required. First come First Serve. Only 50 have been ordered as we have cut down on expenses. The new liturgical year begins this First Sunday of Advent - Year B.

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. God bless. Christopher+

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.

STEWARDSHIP ENVELOPES 2021

Stewardship/Offertory envelopes are available in alphabetical 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. Thank you.

VIRTUAL ADVENT RETREAT

Join retreat facilitator, Terri Pauco from the Family and Youth Office, from the comfort of your own home, for A Virtual Advent Retreat for Busy Catholic Women being held through ZOOM on December 12, 2020 from 9:00am to 11:30am.

Women of all ages are invited to join online to pray and explore the idea of finding peace in the seasonal preparations and busyness of life complicated by the pandemic. Bishop Bergie will lead a portion of this sacred time. This event is free. Register by December 9th using the link found on the diocesan website,

www.saintcd.com.

For more information, call 905-684-0154.

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 10, 2020.

Here is our proposed schedule.

- Christmas Eve December 24.
 - Vigil Mass 5: 00 pm.
 - 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>

You can either call or email the parish office indicating your choice of Mass. Please include your full name and phone number and the number of those attending in your household. Registration will close for a Mass if and when maximum capacity is reached. We regret that we will not be able to accommodate anyone coming to Christmas Mass without a reservation.

Please remember that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass remains in place and people who are at high-risk for severe illness from Covid-19 are encouraged to stay safer at home and participate in Mass remotely. We will be live streaming ALL of our Christmas Masses on Facebook.

Please note: There is no certainty that we will have public Masses at Christmas. For the time being we ask you to continue to register for Christmas Masses. We will continue to monitor the situation and consult with public health officials and our diocesan office to determine the course of action for the weekends ahead.

This has been a difficult year for sure ... there is no debating that. We've all had to make adjustments in our lives, many of which began with real pain but led to positive changes. Remember: We're in this together. God be with you, and within you.

In Christ, Christopher +
Parish Priest

ADVENT: A PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS

As each year draws to a close, and Christmas fast approaches, we tend to focus on what is obvious – putting up our decorations, trimming our tree, shopping for friends and family. And before you know it, time has escaped us.

Suddenly it's Christmas Eve night and all the wonders that come with it – reflecting on Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus, the angels singing, the shepherds in the field, the wise men beginning their descent from the east, all culminating in "Silent Night, Holy Night." But wait! Are we even prepared for Christmas? Prepared for all of the beauty and wonder of Christmas? Truly prepared?

Before the coming of our Lord, is the season of Advent. A time of preparation. The world tells us that Christmas is about filling our homes with bright lights and greenery, attending office parties, singing carols, listening to Handel's "Messiah" or the latest pop star's new Christmas album. The world encourages us to shop, shop and shop!

But should we not also be more intentional (and joyful) when practicing and experiencing the season of Advent? The coming of our Lord!

How to Prepare for Christmas, through Advent

And what should we be doing to prepare for the coming of our Lord? The obvious things are:

- Meditate on our Lord's impending birth
- Give to those in need
- Feed the hungry
- Clothe the homeless
- Be kind to others
- Be satisfied with what we have (gratitude)

What ways can we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus – in our own homes? How about patience – toward those nearest you? Be more willing to listen, less eager to criticize? Give of your time and your person and not necessarily your money.

We can also practice more patience with those outside of our homes – especially in stores or driving on the road (Christmas shopping traffic!). We can be more giving and patient toward those in the workplace. Maybe we can be less prideful and more humble.

How about being more temperate with our sweet tooth (or teeth, for that matter)? Advent challenges us to understand the Christmas season in the contexts of the coming of Christ. Advent also offers us a powerful alternative to the commercialization of Christmas.

A reason to exclaim "Merry Christmas!" instead of a bland and politically correct "Happy Holidays."

A Season for Giving

I'm sure you've heard it before; Christmas is a season for giving. Then make it so. Give to those in need. I'm sure you've heard that Christmas is a time for feasting. Then make it so. Help to feed those around you who can't afford to do so. I'm sure you've heard that Christmas is a season of joy, hope and peace. Then make it so. Grow in these virtues by putting them into practice with friends, family, neighbors and strangers. And most importantly, with the whole reason there is Christmas.

Advent is the story of a wondrous moment when God entered our world to make things right. It is the greatest story ever told and it changes everything—including the way we celebrate Christmas. And the next time someone asks you, "Are you ready for Christmas?" you can honestly say, "I'm not but I'm trying to be with the help of the season of Advent."

Nativity Scene

The church nativity scene is proper for Christmas and not Advent. Once again others have requested that it be displayed. This seems to be an annual request. I've once again readdressed the issue with the individuals. It truly is disappointing since I was expecting a different narrative given the pandemic. We are all struggling to maintain our resilience and hope as we look forward to Advent and the coming Christmas season. Hopefully, our Advent season will prepare us for the coming feasts of Christmas and the display of the nativity scene. I might add to diffuse disappointment - the wise men (or three kings) will be added on the feast of Epiphany on 6th January, as is liturgically proper to the feast.

We must be careful not to speak of "should" and "shouldn't" and "right" and "wrong" because there is no right and wrong. The liturgy has rubrics. The GIRM and other Church documents specify what may and may not be on the altar, said, sung, or otherwise used in the Mass and other liturgies. There is no right and wrong when it comes to nativity scenes. Let's not state our opinions on how we prefer to do things as if they were rubrics of the Church or the personal wishes of others.

I pray for us as a "Faith Community" that we continue our faith journey towards Advent, Christmas and the Kingdom of God. As we journey towards our celebration of the Lord's Birth, let us pray for one another, for all our families, that we be renewed in our commitment to be good stewards of HOPE in this current pandemic. May Mary, who rejoiced at the coming birth of Her Son, pray for us that we may truly be His disciples.

In Christ, Christopher + Parish Priest.