



St. Gerard

Roman Catholic Parish

December 19th, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Established December 11, 1904

LORD'S DAY MASS TIMES
Saturday at 5:00 pm, Sunday at 9:00 am & 11:00 am

CONTACT US

Parish Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am-noon/1pm-4pm (closed Friday)

125 Third Avenue North, Yorkton, SK S3N 1C4

www.stgerard.ca | Telephone: 306.782.2449 | Email: office@stgerard.ca

St. Gerard Parish is located on Treaty 4 Territory, the traditional lands of the Nēhiyawak, Nahkawé, and Nakota, and homeland of the Dakota, Lakota, and Métis peoples.

Pastor.....	Fr. Louis Nguyen	306.782.0323	louisyorkton@gmail.com
Parish Office Administrator.....	Sandra Archer	306.782.2449	office@stgerard.ca
Caretaker.....	Mario Guerra		

MASS/SERVICE SCHEDULE

Mon. (20th) NO MASS
 Tues. (21st) 7:00pm +Ambrose Wolfe
 Wed. (22nd) 9:00am Denis & Marianne Dierker
 10:00am **NURSING HOME (NORTH)**
 +Peter & +Irene Cherneski
 Thurs. (23rd) 9:00am +Debra Churko
 2:30pm **BENTLEY SENIORS' RESIDENCE**
 Tony Kryski

Fri. (24th) 4:00pm *The children of our parish*
 7:00pm Mass for the People
 10:00pm Special Intentions



The Nativity of the Lord
(Holy Day of Obligation)

Sat. (25th) 9:00am Special Intentions
 11:00am Mass for the People

5:00pm Mass for the People

Sun. (26th) **HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH**
 9:00am +Eugene Kuemper
 11:00am +Beatrice Ikwueme

WELCOME!

Please note the following per the **Archdiocese of Regina guidelines** (effective July 11, 2021) and the **Government of Saskatchewan Interim Health Order** (extended until January 31, 2021):

- **Masks must be worn at all times until further notice**
- Masks & hand sanitizer are provided.
- **Please sit in the pews that have hymnals and maintain two metres between households**
- The choir and singing has resumed
- Holy water will not be available in the Baptismal font at this time
- We will not shake hands when we share the sign of peace
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection continues

Please come! Everyone is welcome!



Come and Spend an Hour with the Lord!

Eucharistic Holy Hour Devotion
at 6pm (prior to 7pm Tuesday Mass)

Stay
Connected
Online!

www.stgerard.ca



Lord, your Word gives me life, joy, hope, and peace. May your Word find a home in me and inspire me to live a life rooted in gospel values.

- From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

A Note from Your Pastor

My Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We have been waiting for the Lord and now the wait is almost over. Christmas is only a few days away. Today is a moment to check what we were called to do the First Sunday of Advent: pray every day, join Bible Study, attend daily Mass, go to Confession. We celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent as a final reminder that Christ is coming.

Here is my summary of the readings today. The first reading, from the book of Micah, reminds us that Christ is coming: *“You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judea, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days”*. The psalmist sings: *“Restore us, O God; ... that we may be saved”*. And then the Gospel gives us the meeting of Elizabeth and Mary. The wait is over for them, as Elizabeth realizes as she says: *“Why has this happened to me, that the Mother of my Lord comes to me?”*

I would like to emphasize the powerful words at the end of the first reading: *“He shall be peace.”* Who is the prophet Micah talking about? It is Jesus Christ, the Lord.

Isn't that interesting? It doesn't say that the Savior will bring peace, but that **He is peace**. Why is He peace? Because peace means wholeness, peace means unity. If we are not in a good relationship with God, then we cannot be at peace with ourselves or with others. I recall that Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta used to say: *“I am not ok, and you are not ok, and that is why Jesus came.”*

We should be aware that in Jesus, in the sacraments that make Him present, we come to be at peace with God. For example, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, our sins are forgiven and we are at peace with God, or in the Eucharist, we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and we are united to God. And that experience brings an awareness of the great story into which all our individual stories fit. We earn peace when we celebrate these sacraments, and then we will start to see others with the eyes of Christ. So we need to see that Christ himself is peace, we must see and acknowledge that he, himself, is peace.

When we come to know Jesus Christ, his person, his message, and his mission, we come to understand and trust God's providence, even though sin has turned this fallen world into a valley of suffering and tears. We have no doubt that God is at work in the world, slowly setting things right. He comes to bring us back to the right path.

To conclude, I would give you a few more questions that I want you to ask yourself: Do I have peace in my heart? Do I have peace in my home, my family?

My dear sisters and brothers, the Prince of Peace is coming, gently guiding the course of history, leading his children to the green pastures of true wisdom, lasting joy, and eternal life. He is Peace. Prepare yourself to welcome Him.

Love you all.

Fr. Louis Nguyen



The Sacrament of Reconciliation



Saturdays at **8:30 am** or by appt.

WELCOMERS, LECTORS, HOSPITALITY MINISTERS (USHERS)

The **Christmas & New Year Ministries sign-up sheets** are in the Welcome Area. PLEASE SIGN-UP TODAY!

The **2021-2022 Sunday Missals** are available in the Welcome Area. A \$5.00 free-will offering is appreciated.

What is a Sunday Missal? It is a book that includes all of the texts of the Sunday Mass (readings, prayers, and responses) as well as traditional Catholic prayers and prayers for specific intentions.

Reading and meditating on the scriptures in the Sunday Missal prior to Sunday Mass is a great way to prepare for the liturgy.



Christmas & New Year Mass Schedule

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

4:00 pm

Mass for Families with Young Children

7:00 pm 10:00 pm

Dec. 25 - Christmas Day

(Holy Day of Obligation)

9:00 am 11:00 am

Dec. 31 – Mass of Thanksgiving

7:00 pm

Jan. 1 – The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God *(Holy Day of Obligation)*

10:00 am



News from the CWL



2022 memberships are \$30.00 and can be placed in an envelope marked 'CWL' and put in the collection basket, or mail to CWL, 125 3rd Ave N, Yorkton, S3N 1C4. For other arrangements please call Paulette 306.782.7923.



News from the Knights of Columbus



If you are interested in joining the Knights, please call Keith Hayward @ 306.783.0963. www.kofc-2031.ca

News from the Archdiocese of Regina



St. Gerard Parish Goal -\$45,768
Giving to Date -\$20,475
% of Goal to Date - **44.74%**

Christmas Season Livestream Mass Schedule

December 24:

11:00 PM (Christmas Carols for one hour before Midnight Mass) – Livestreamed from Holy Rosary Cathedral

December 25:

9:00 AM – Livestreamed from Resurrection Parish

January 1:

11:00 AM – Livestreamed from Holy Rosary Cathedral

Livestream Link:

www.youtube.com/ArchdioceseRegina

PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS SEASON HOURS

Monday	Dec. 20	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Tuesday	Dec. 21	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Wednesday	Dec. 22	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Thursday	Dec. 23	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Friday	Dec. 24	Closed
Monday	Dec. 27	Closed
Tuesday	Dec. 28	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Wednesday	Dec. 29	9am-noon/1pm-4pm
Thursday	Dec. 30	9am-noon
Friday	Dec. 31	Closed

H	A	E	L	H	A	D	U	J	A	MARY	JUDAH	ZECHARIAH
E	A	T	O	T	M	B	O	W	D	ELIZABETH	CHILD	LEAPT
L	B	I	M	E	O	Y	J	R	E	WOMB	BLESSED	FRUIT
I	L	U	R	B	M	O	W	A	S	MOTHER	JOY	PROMISE
Z	E	R	O	A	L	A	T	H	S			
A	S	F	E	Z	H	E	R	C	E			
B	E	D	L	I	H	C	O	Y	L			
T	P	A	E	L	O	T	E	A	B			
M	O	T	H	E	R	S	O	Z	L			
D	E	S	I	M	O	R	P	M	E			





Bringing Home the Word

True Love Means Sacrifice

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

God is often present in the little, hidden things of life. Take for example the small town of Bethlehem. This place barely appeared on the maps of the time. Yet in this dull town, overlooked by all, God wished to be born. God isn't into bling.

Look at the Vatican painting *Annunciation* by Gentile da Fabriano. A ray of light in the painting shines from the upper left window directly down onto Mary's womb. She carries in her the Light of the World, but it happened in a way unbeknownst to anyone. He is the Light of the World, shining to catch our attention, but he does so in silence, humility, and intimacy.

There is a second aspect of the Incarnation to learn here. Christmas was about a real sacrifice. Mary and Jesus offered their very selves. Hebrews says it wasn't an animal or a wheat offering but Jesus' very body and blood. The same for Mary, as it was her life, her virginity, her very intimacy, that she was opening to God when she agreed to be the mother of the Lord. It's easy to be generous when it doesn't touch too close to home.

So, try not to look for glitz and externals this Christmas but for God's hidden presence. And imitate Jesus and Mary by giving of your very self. It's not about a fast, a donation, or extra prayers—as good as those Advent practices are. But all of this prepares us to give our very selves to him in trust through the hidden acts of love of every day.

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“The mystery of the Christian family can be fully understood only in the light of the Father’s infinite love revealed in Christ, who gave himself up for our sake and who continues to dwell in our midst. I now wish to turn my gaze to the living Christ, who is at the heart of so many love stories, and to invoke the fire of the Spirit upon all the world’s families. The Lord is also with us today, as we seek to practice and pass on the Gospel of the family.”

- Pope Francis, 2016

2022 Giving Program

The 2022 Sunday collection (offertory) envelopes are in the Welcome Area for those who had contributed by this method in 2021.

If you do not have envelopes and would like to receive a set for 2022, **please complete a Parish Registration Form**, located in the Welcome Area.

Have you considered Pre-Authorized Giving? Pre-authorized Giving is convenient, assured, results in lower administrative costs, and assists our parish when budgeting for programs and services. **Please complete the Pre-Authorized Giving form** and submit it to the Parish Office. Forms are available in the Welcome Area.

Please note: The deadline for 2021 donations is **Thursday, December 30th at 12 noon**, including e-transfers.

Donations received after this deadline will be processed as 2022.

Thank you for your financial support of our parish!

On behalf of the Social Justice Committee, I would like to thank you for your generosity and support for this year's Giving Tree Campaign.



From the household fleeing family violence, to those whose limited resources are truly stretched at this time of year just to put food on the table, to those who may be alone without the support of their family, your gifts and kindness are greatly appreciated. You have made this year's program a resounding success and have truly made a stranger's Christmas that much better and brighter.

Thank you for your continued support and I wish you and yours a truly special holiday season.

Remember those whose food insecurities run high. Please donate an item or two to the Food Bank collection trunk located in the Welcome Area of the church.

- Submitted by Mark Bell,
Social Justice Committee Chairperson

THE WEEK AHEAD

Mon. (20th): 7:00pm- Bible Study (Lower Level)

Indigenous Peoples and the Church: Walking Together Toward Healing and Reconciliation

Listening, Connecting and Walking in Solidarity: Reconciliation in Our Archdiocese

Over the past months, we have been hearing about the recovery process of unmarked graves at Residential School sites in Canada, which has reached the consciousness of our church and the larger community in a new way. The pain and trauma caused by these schools has always been at the forefront for Indigenous Peoples, especially for Survivors who attended them. There is a renewed commitment in the church to support and walk with Indigenous Peoples on this path of truth and reconciliation.

We know that this will be a long journey, and we are prepared to do what is necessary to move towards right relationships with Indigenous Peoples. Listening, offering an apology, making amends, and walking together in solidarity with Indigenous communities will all play a part. The [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #61](#) will be a roadmap to draw upon. Those around us will be "watching our feet" to see how we fulfill our commitments to reconciliation.

Bishop Don and Sr. RéAnne Letourneau have been in conversation with Residential School Survivors, Elders and Indigenous community members, asking them about what solidarity and support is needed from their perspective. Here is some of what they have heard:

- That Indigenous spiritual leaders can assist in facilitating a way forward;
- That financial support should be prioritized for the needs of survivors;
- That a Regina-based initiative guided by survivors could help with healing and intergenerational trauma caused by Catholic-operated Residential Schools;
- That assistance would be welcome with work related to cemeteries connected with Catholic-operated Residential Schools;
- That building connections with parishioners of Catholic parishes, especially those near First Nations communities, are an important part of the reconciliation journey.

How can our archdiocese fulfill TRC responsibilities in a practical way?

- We have created an archdiocesan TRC Healing Fund to receive the resources that will be used to help take our reconciliation commitments from theory to reality:
 - We will be offering those who have already donated to the Rebuilding Our Church Campaign the opportunity or redirect (or top up) a portion of their donation to go to the TRC Healing Fund;
 - We will be offering all parishioners the opportunity to support the TRC Healing Response Fund either when they donate to the Archbishop's Appeal or via a pew collection in December;
 - The allocation of funds that have been designated for justice work; and
 - The collection of online funds from the Sask Bishops Healing Response Appeal.

We are working with Indigenous partners on both a plan and the structures to support the plan:

- Our intention is to invite Indigenous and non-Indigenous members to working groups for potential project initiatives for Regina and outside Regina;
- We are planning how to use TRC Healing Fund resources most effectively and transparently and with clear accountability.

As we create pathways and structures to build relationships and share resources in a good way, we are conscious of how important it is not to repeat the mistakes of the past. The main guidance on this journey must come from Indigenous survivors, Elders and spiritual leaders, with the church's role being to support, listen, connect, and walk in solidarity.





HOMILY OF THE MOST REV. DONALD BOLEN, ARCHBISHOP OF REGINA

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday, 19 December 2021

Today's Readings:

1st Reading: Micah 5:1-4A;

2nd Reading: Hebrews 10_5-10

Gospel: Luke 1 1:39-45

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, it is the 4th Sunday of Advent, the darkest Sunday of the year in terms of hours of daylight, but a day full of expectation. We hold in our imaginations Mary and Joseph, on the way to Bethlehem, Mary days away from giving birth, carrying within her the little one who created all things and who indeed carries us. Today's Gospel moves us back a few months earlier, as we hear of Mary travelling to visit her older cousin Elizabeth, who is also with child. St Luke says Mary travelled with haste. Something extraordinary is happening, and Elizabeth is in some way sharing the mystery of this moment.

Through this Advent season, we have also turned our attention to another journey, that of the Indigenous delegation to Rome to meet with Pope Francis. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit survivors, elders, knowledge keepers, leaders, and youth were scheduled to be in Rome right now, with meetings with Pope Francis already under way. The encounter had been in the planning for three years, but the pandemic has caused one delay after another – and we find ourselves yet again in the waiting mode. But this waiting, just as in the season of Advent, needn't and shouldn't be a passive waiting; it can be a time of expectation, preparation, and transformation. We trust that God can turn all things to good, and the delay itself can serve as a reminder that the path to reconciliation and right relationships is long, with forks on the road, bumps and detours. The walking together is more important than any particular destination along the way, and living this particular moment as faithfully and generously as possible is the task the Lord has given us.

The preparation for the trip to Rome has included the experience of listening circles held in different parts of the country, where bishops have been able to hear firsthand of varied and at times brutally painful Indigenous experiences of church, and where we have seen anew the honesty and resilience, strength and wisdom of Indigenous people and Indigenous ways. When the delegates and Pope Francis will eventually have the opportunity to meet, each delegate will have stories to tell, stories carrying a lifetime of experiences, sufferings and joys. We pray that their encounter will point us to renewing ways for all of us to walk together on this land.

There have been many meaningful encounters between Indigenous Peoples and Popes before, and they provide some context for the current visit. In 1987, St. Pope John Paul II visited Fort Simpson, in the Northwest Territories, 3 years after an earlier attempt to visit there which was postponed because his plane couldn't land as a result of poor weather conditions. There he acknowledged that for untold generations, Indigenous Peoples "have lived in a relationship of trust with the Creator." He encouraged them in addressing the challenge of promoting, I quote, "the religious, cultural and social values that will uphold your human dignity and ensure your future well-being. Your sense of sharing, your understanding of human community rooted in the family, the highly valued relationships between your elders and your young people, your spiritual view of creation which calls for responsible care and protection of the environment - all of these traditional aspects of your way of life need to be preserved and cherished."

The Indigenous delegation to Rome in 2009 led by then AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine to meet with Pope Benedict, and Pope Francis's address to the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas in Bolivia in 2015, were also important moments of encounter. These encounters acknowledged the suffering and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples. Today, further steps are needed to come to terms with the past and to move forward in a good way.

All of this we bring into today's celebration of the 4th Sunday of Advent. It is timely to ponder the long journey of truth and reconciliation as we as Church prepare to celebrate the extraordinary decision and act of God to come into the world, to take flesh, to embrace the human condition. The Incarnation, God's way of healing and redeeming a wounded humanity by walking with us, accompanying us with mercy in our pain and in our joy, this has everything to do with how the Church is being called to walk with Indigenous Peoples today in this land. God walks with us. The Risen Lord is neither afraid nor reluctant to come

walk with us in the messiness and brokenness of our lives, the pain and complexity of this moment in time. Indeed because of the Incarnation we believe that Jesus is at home in all of that, and asks us to be at home in it as well. And God asks us to walk with each other in the same spirit, immersing ourselves in the challenges, struggles and complexities of our histories and our lives.

Giving birth to something new is not easy. It is messy and traumatic. But with every birth, God is doing something new. So let us ask God to allow something new to be born out of our efforts to deal honestly with the past, to adopt a deep posture of listening, to learn from the wisdom of Indigenous ways, and to learn how to walk in a deep and committed solidarity with Indigenous Peoples as the Creator guides them, guides us all, to a future full of hope.

"Rich blessings on these last days of Advent!"

YOUTH REFLECTION

"Blessed is the Fruit of Your Womb"

This Week...

In the tiny town of Bethlehem the saviour of all humanity is to be born - a tiny helpless infant. This infant appears just like any other - a blessing to a mother, a joy to other members of the family, and a miracle. When Elizabeth greets Mary, her joy is so complete that even Elizabeth's own baby feels it. This instance of cousin meeting cousin, pregnant woman meeting pregnant woman, represents the will of God in the flesh.

For Your Reflection

When Elizabeth and Mary met, they were both pregnant, and they were both filled with joy and hope. But sometimes when a woman finds she is pregnant, it isn't always good news. Sometimes it takes quite an adjustment, and sometimes difficult decisions must be made.

- Do you know anyone who has been pregnant? Do you know what kind of an experience it was for her? What do you see as the joys and the challenges of being pregnant?
- Have you ever played with a baby? Have you ever held a newborn? Have you ever changed a baby's diaper? Have you ever fed a baby? How much time have you spent with babies? How do you feel about babies?

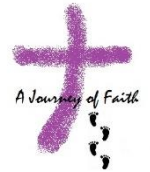
Excerpt adapted from *In Touch With the Word, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter*- St. Mary's Press, 2004



RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA) is an incredible journey of discovery, the discovery of God's love in Jesus. If you or someone you know is interested in exploring the friendship and saving grace of Jesus Christ, we invite you to join us in the RCIA journey. It is a warm, welcoming experience that introduces the Christian faith in our Roman Catholic tradition. We explore topics such as Holy Scripture, the Sacraments, Church history and the core beliefs of the Church. Anyone who has taken this "leap of faith" has found it to be a life-altering experience.

The RCIA process is intended for those who are non-baptized. There are several rites and stages that are part of the process to prepare adults for Baptism and to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church. If you have been baptized in another Christian tradition, the Catholic Church respects that baptism. Baptism is the sacrament of our rebirth in Christ and our immersion into His saving death and Resurrection. It can never be repeated. Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church happens after a period of preparation through catechesis, prayer and worship, and an introduction to Catholic life, values, and mission.



Adults who have been baptized in the Catholic Church but have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation can prepare for reception of this sacrament through a period of catechesis and prayer.

If you are interested in this journey of faith, please contact Fr. Louis at 306.782.2449 or 306.782.0323.

And to all our friends in St. Gerard's parish, we remind you that we all have a responsibility to share our faith and bring others to Christ. If you know of a family member, friend, co-worker or fellow student who is searching for a deeper meaning in their life, let them know about RCIA.

LOST SOMETHING?



Mitts, toques, etc. – check the literature display drawer marked "Lost and Found" in the Welcome Area.

Books, religious articles, jewellery, etc. – contact the Parish Office.

OFFERING A MASS

The offering of a Mass in the name of a deceased family member or friend is one of the greatest ways to keep our beloved dead in our living memory. At each celebration of the Mass, the great prayer of sacrifice is made complete as Jesus' life, death and resurrection is offered to God the Father. When we offer a Mass for a particular person, we ask that in a special way the individual be remembered by the priest who offers up the great sacrifice on behalf of the whole community of faith. In a very real and active way, the life, death and resurrection of the person remembered becomes present and is offered up with Jesus. Each time we offer up a Mass for someone, living or dead, we celebrate the greatest gift of our faith – the gift of Everlasting Life in Christ.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available daily at the EADM Centre Chapel at 484 Hamilton St. Regina. Hours: 10:00 am to 8:00 pm on Monday through Thursday. Friday, Saturday & Sunday: 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Please help us keep Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament available in Regina on a daily basis.

The Healing and Growth Centre St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission

St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission – Searching for God's purpose in your life? Want to live life more fully, and take your faith to the next level? Then, come to St. Therese! At St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission, adults of all ages can explore their faith, discern their vocation in life, foster their prayer life and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. Visit on line at www.sttherese.ca

Rachel's Vineyard: a psychological and spiritual journey for healing after abortion.

Are you hurting because of an abortion? **Rachel's Vineyard** is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer you a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal and healing. For more information, please contact Elaine at 1.306.480.8911 or email r.vineyardsk@sasktel.net

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY offers distance education courses for adults seeking faith formation for personal and professional development: ***Diploma in Ministry; Certificate in Lay Ministry; Come Let Us Worship: A course in liturgical foundations; Certificate in Spirituality; and Diploma in Intellectual Disability Studies.***

For an information package please contact Continuing & Distance Education, St. Francis Xavier University, toll free 1-877-867-5562, diplomainministry@stfx.ca