



St. Gerard

Roman Catholic Parish

December 24, 2017

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Established December 11, 1904

LORD'S DAY MASS TIMES:

Saturday at 7:00 pm, Sunday at 9:00 am & 11:00 am

MASS SCHEDULE

Tues. (26 th)	9:30 am-	+Norbert Soyka
Wed. (27 th):	9:30 am-	+Ann Bisschop
Thurs. (28 th)	9:30 am-	Rev. Edward Gibney
Fri. (29 th)	9:30 am-	+Jimmy Flavel
Sat. (30 th):	10:00 am-	Mariquita Thomas

	7:00 pm-	+Al Herchuk
Sun. (31 st):	Feast of the Holy Family	
	9:00 am-	+Elsie & +Lewis Olshewski
	11:00 am-	Mass for the People

New Year's Eve

8:00 pm Mass for the People

New Year's Day

10:00 am Mass for the People

The Solemnity of Mary, The Mother of God
(Holy Day of Obligation)

SACRAMENTS

Reconciliation: Half-hour before Saturday morning and evening Mass or anytime by appointment.

Infant Baptism: Please contact Fr. Louis at least one month prior to Baptism.

RCIA: Adults wishing to be received into the Catholic Church should contact Fr. Louis.

Matrimony: Please contact Fr. Louis at least 6 months prior to the time you would like to be married.

Anointing: Please contact Fr. Louis at any time. For Anointing of the Sick and other emergencies, you may contact Fr. Louis at 1.306.530.0126

CONTACT US

Telephone: 306.782.2449 | Email: office@stgerard.ca | Hours: Monday-Friday 8am-noon, 1pm-4pm
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Stay Connected Online!
www.stgerard.ca



Lord, you have called us to be your instruments of peace and reconciliation in the world. Give me the courage to make peace with those who have hurt me and caused me pain. Amen.

- From *Faithful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

Note from your Pastor

My dear sisters and brothers,

I wish all of you and your families a very blessed Christmas. May your Christmas sparkle with moments of love, laughter and goodwill; and may the New Year 2018 be full of contentment, joy, peace, love and unity. You and your loved ones are in the intentions of my Christmas and New Year's Masses. I love you all. Blessings to all.

Rev. Louis Nguyen

Christmas Message 2017 from Archbishop Don Bolen

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
Greetings of peace and joy to you, in the Christ Child who is born among us.

Years ago, living and working in Rome, I had the chance to visit Naples, and a particular district in Naples where they make and sell beautiful handmade nativity scenes. The most interesting thing to discover was that the charming little buildings housing the manger and neighbourhood all resembled their own humble dwellings. They were depicting Jesus being born into their reality.

It is a beautiful thing to note how Christian communities in different places around the world, with very different cultures, have produced nativity scenes and characters that depict what a birth in very humble circumstances would look like for them. This isn't the self-centredness of each culture on display but, rather, a profound insight: the Jesus, who was born at one particular place and time, does indeed come to all of us, comes to seek us all out, just like the good shepherd that Jesus would go on to speak about.

This is the story of how our God, who created such an incredibly vast universe, who created the human condition in all its startling complexity, its potential for chaos and for greatness, decided and chose to do something more amazing still: to become a part of that creation. In the words of Pope Francis, God in Jesus chooses to mix himself up with us in the journey of life, to attach his life to ours, to become small. In his ministry, Jesus would say to the Father, "you have hidden these things from the wise and revealed them to little ones" (*Mt 11,25*). But God doesn't just reveal himself to little ones, God in Jesus *becomes* little, small enough to be held in the palms of our hands. God does this, Pope Francis suggests, to speak to our hearts in a language we can understand. Like a loving parent, "it seems that our God wants to sing us a lullaby." And in the great tenderness of God, which Pope Francis says is "God's defining trait", we in turn, through Mary and Joseph, sing a lullaby to God.

It is right and good that every culture around the world where this message is heard should come to find their own ways to celebrate and be filled with amazement and joy. God comes to us and where we are. And we do well to ask: If Jesus was born in our world, today, where would he come? Would we recognize him? How should we depict Jesus' birth? Where should we look for him? Where will he find us?

If God comes to us in hiddenness and poverty, in smallness and vulnerability, we do well, friends, to look for him there: in the refugee child, in the sister who has suffered abuse, in the brother who feels abandoned, in the young person who feels marginalized, in the people who feel pushed aside. And we do well to go out especially to those who we ourselves have wounded, to those that our church, or our community or our society, have wounded and marginalized. Let's go and seek out the Christ there. And lastly, let's not overlook our own vulnerability, our own wounds. For the Lord comes even there, even unto us *there*, is born a saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

Christ is born! Come let us adore Him!



SACRAMENTS of INITIATION PREPARATION



BAPTISM

The First Sacrament of Initiation

The next baptism session will be held Sunday, January 28th at 6:30 pm. Please contact the Parish Office to register – 306.782.2449

CONFIRMATION

The Second Sacrament of Initiation

FIRST EUCHARIST

The Third Sacrament of Initiation

The preparation sessions for Confirmation and First Eucharist begin on January 7th, 2018 at 6:30 pm. If your child is in grade 2 or older please call the Parish Office to register.

A Word from Pope Francis

[Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem] were alone, in a strange land, just the three of them. Then ... people began to appear: shepherds, people just like them who had to leave their homes to find better opportunities for their families ... When they heard that Jesus had been born, they went to see him. They became neighbours ... a family to Mary and Joseph, the family of Jesus. This is what happens when Jesus comes into our lives ... He makes us neighbours.

--Address in Banado Norte,
a Paraguay slum, July 12, 2015

Reminder:

**The last day to contribute to St. Gerard Church
is Sunday, December 31st @ 12 noon.**

***** Please note that donations received at the
7 pm Mass on New Year's Eve will be processed as
2018 *****



News from the CWL



The CWL wishes everyone a joyful and blessed Christmas! To all our members: thank you for your help, support and enthusiasm throughout the year. It is a joy and blessing to work side by side as CWL sisters, for God and Canada! Merry Christmas!



News from the Knights of Columbus



If you are interested in joining the Knights, please call Brian @ 306.730.7083 or 306.730.7017 after 5 pm (or leave a message).

More info: www.kofc-2031.ca

News from the Archdiocese of Regina

The faithful of the Archdiocese
Are cordially invited to

Archbishop's New Year's Levee

to be held at

Holy Rosary Cathedral

3125-13th Ave., Regina

January 1, 2018

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

*And to receive the Archbishop's blessing
for the beginning of the New Year*

Please come and meet the Archbishop and exchange New Year's greetings. Refreshments in the parish hall.

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHBISHOP'S APPEAL OFFICE

*Give the Gift of Hope this Christmas – Hope for the sick –
Hope for our youth – Hope for those in prison*

These are just a few of the ministries supported by the Archbishop's Appeal.

If you have not already donated to the 2017 Archbishop's Appeal, it is not too late! You may donate online at the website www.archregina.sk.ca or call the office at 306.352.1651 ext. 210. THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN!



Bringing Home the Word

Welcoming Our Lord

By Mary Katharine Deeley

In the whole of the New Testament, Mary appears only a handful of times. She is, of course, present at the birth of Jesus and at his death. She comes looking for her son in the Temple when he's twelve and again when he's preaching. She lets him know that the time has come for his first miracle when he's in Cana.

She has more to say in this story of the annunciation than in any of the others, and in this one story we get more than a glimpse of the woman she would become in our memory – called on by millions, revered by all – an example of unparalleled obedience and openness to the movement of God in her life.

It strikes me that, along with being the Mother of God (the Orthodox Church uses the word *theotokos*, which means "God-bearer"), Mary is our example of the best response to the presence of God. We let him in; we show God hospitality in our very being; we allow God to change our lives in ways we cannot even imagine yet.

The reality for most of us, though, is that in many times and places we have had the chance to welcome God in. Instead, we've shut God out because we thought something else was more important. Maybe it was power or wealth. Perhaps God was challenging us to move on a particular path, and we didn't want to.

Maybe our question for the week is, *what would happen if I do as God asks?*

On this Christmas Eve, let us practice saying yes to God – for in doing this, we honour the mother of us all.

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Upcoming Parish Events can be found online at <http://www.stgerard.ca/events-calendar.php>

Check it out today!!

Prayer for Life and the Family

God of gentle correction and everlasting love,

whisper to us your call to turn around.

Help us to look for the places we have failed to love.

Give us the courage to choose again, to turn back to you and receive the life we have rejected by our failing.

Teach us to love the act of repenting, of turning back to you again and again.

Amen.

New to the parish?? WELCOME !!!



Please complete a new parishioner form (yellow) and place in the collection basket at mass. Or stop by the Parish Office. We'd love to meet you!

THE WEEK AHEAD

Tues. (26th) Parish Office Close

YOUTH REFLECTION

"Righting Wrongs"

This Week...

We are responsible for ourselves, our world, and one another. If we are not part of the solution, then we are part of the problem. We don't even have to be successful, as long as we faithfully and lovingly do our best and give our all. But if we don't do our best and give our all, then we are responsible for the problem and all its consequences. Whenever two or three join together in prayer, Jesus' presence is assured.

For Your Reflection

Ezekiel and Jesus both have good advice for dealing with people when wrong things are done.

- How easy is it to confront a friend when you think you have been wronged or treated badly? Do you tend to ignore the wrong? Do you talk about it honestly? Or do you tend to hold a grudge?
- Does the advice in today's readings relate to today's situations, or do you think we need to look at other alternatives when dealing with modern wrongs? How so?

Jesus assures us that whenever two or three pray together, Jesus is always there, and our prayers are always answered.

- Do you think that prayers are always answered? Or do you think it depends on the type of prayer and what is asked for? Or do you think that prayers are always answered, but sometimes the answer is no? How do you think prayer works?
- What kind of prayers do you most often pray? Do your prayers ask for something? Do you pray for strength and guidance? Do you ever pray with one or two others?

Excerpt from *In Touch With the Word, Cycle A for Ordinary Time* 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 our city 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 or check the website:

www.mystfx.ca/academic/continuinged/Ministry.html