



Volume 6

THE Voice

ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Issue 12

December-2023



Parish Priest Message

Advent

HE CAME, HE COMES, HE WILL COME

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus,

Advent calls to mind three “comings” of Christ, the first in history – **HE CAME** - the second now – **HE COMES** - and the third at the end of time – **HE WILL COME**. Meditating upon each of these will be a helpful preparation for the holy season of Advent upon which we are embarking.

Suppose you are at home and you’re busy with something with deep concentration. There’s an unexpected knock on the door. “Who could it be?” you ask as you head towards it, anxious to open and see.

We are here at the beginning of Advent and we take our tentative first steps into the new liturgical year. We all have a sense of anticipation—we are eager for a time, a time we have hoped for, this time of the coming of the Lord Jesus, Christmas. We all are eager and joyfully call on Jesus, “**Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!**” This preparation is an invitation that we look beyond the darkness of human sin and failure, to the radiant light of Jesus’ coming. We want to proclaim with greater and greater joy as we come closer and closer to Christmas but we do not dare to do wholeheartedly yet, that **with the birth of Jesus the reign of God comes alive into our midst**.

The Advent, the coming of Jesus should mean for us, preparing ourselves to open our hearts to Jesus in whose visible face we see the invisible face of God’s love, mercy and compassion in our midst. His radiance of light shining from His face turns our faces—no matter how imperfect we may be—to what we are all meant to become, a lot more human so as to become a little more divine.

We can however miss this Advent invitation to re-orientate our Christian lives onto Jesus. Jesus comes to us in innumerable ways. We encounter Him in our daily lives in different circumstances and different situations.

Did we miss such opportunity to meet Him and encounter Him, when we look back on our relationship with Jesus this past year? Did we miss such opportunity, when we look back on our relationship with the spouse or children or parents this past year? Did we miss such opportunity, when we look back on our faith life and prayer life this past year? Could we all make this same mistake this Advent and forego the Advent grace of re-orienting our lives? Possibly.

This is why we should heed Jesus’ warning that comes on our way through the Word of God and inspirational words and deeds of those around us. If we did, **we would welcome his coming—not as a past event we celebrate but as his daily interventions in our lives**. “Behold, I am coming soon” is Jesus’ message. Christians must live in hope-filled anticipation of Jesus’ coming for where he is, there too will be the life-giving wellspring.

“Behold, I am coming” says Jesus. We may be anxious when we hear his words because we know we are ill-prepared to welcome him? Or, are we jubilant, expectant, and hopeful because we know we’ve prepared well to welcome him and to be with him? Let us hope that it is the latter. Then, we can indeed say—with gratitude and joy—“**Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus**”. Our mouths will proclaim his coming wholeheartedly.

Jesus also admonishes during the Advent with these words, “**don’t let the day of my coming catch you like a trap. Be vigilant; expect me at all times**”. They are harsh and challenging words for us to hear today. But they are Jesus’ wisdom for us to hear him and be saved.

Those who hear and humble themselves are wise: they know the value of the Advent grace to re-orientate their lives. By taking hold of this opportunity, we can **make of our lives in Advent so much more hospitable and welcoming to embrace God who comes to us in Jesus** in different ways and different circumstances and especially at Christmas. If we are ready, our strong will and desire empowers us to answer Jesus’ challenge with these words: “**Come, Lord, we are ready for you.**”



Going back to the fact of unexpected knock you hear, you go to the door. You open the door. You see the face of a friend that you have often spoken to, but have not seen for some time. Recognizing his face, joy floods you and you pull him to you and into your home. Imagine this surprise you will experience when you answer that unexpected knock on your door.

Expect such a surprise, anticipate such joy. This is the Advent promise: **all our preparation will lead us to open our door to Jesus. He is coming to be with us. Don’t hesitate; be expectant; look forward to that knock on our door**. Our expectant hope will turn into joy, Christmas Joy, because Christ is with us.

Wish you all a Blessed season of Advent and a good preparation for Christmas.

AND A HAPPY CHRISTMAS IN ADVANCE.

Fr. Maxim Cardoza, OFM. Cap
Parish Priest-Musaffah

SIMBANG GABI



A Beacon of Christmas Spirit Amidst Distance

In the heart of the United Arab Emirates, we find a familiar solace during the Christmas season, despite being thousands of miles away from home, the tradition of Simbang Gabi brings the warmth of Filipino Christmas to the expatriate community.

The distance from family and homeland can be keenly felt, especially during the holiday season, however, Simbang Gabi becomes a symbol of hope. It's a reminder that, even we are far away from home, the essence of Christmas and the strength derived from faith can overcome the challenges of distance and homesickness.

Starting on December 15th until December 23rd, Simbang Gabi is a time for us Filipinos to come together in prayer and reflection. The masses, typically held at night which signify spiritual preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ. The festive lights of the Christmas tree and the melodic tunes of Christmas carols infuse a unique charm to the tradition, welcoming the faithful at different churches across the UAE.

The core of Simbang Gabi is the profound faith that characterizes the Filipino people, despite the challenges faced throughout the year, we come together during this season to express our gratitude, hopes, and dreams in prayer.

There's also a shared belief that the culmination of the nine nights holds a special significance, with the faithful anticipating that our prayers will be heard and wishes granted. It's a comforting thought, especially for those who may be facing daily challenges in life.

It is not just a religious practice; it's a cultural celebration too as diversity amongst us Filipino expats is beautifully reflected in the unity found during these nine nights regardless of differences in background or profession.

It is also a testament to the resilience and adaptability of the Filipino spirit. It's a celebration that brings the magic of Christmas to the desert sands, reminding us Filipinos the festive spirit of Simbang Gabi which make us feel at home.



As a conclusion, we would like to invite every Filipinos to come together and feel the festive spirit of Simbang Gabi here at Saint Paul's Church Mussafah. This year, we are honoured to announce that Father Domingo Resurreccion OFM will be leading the celebrations with the theme, "Paskong Pilipino ng

Mananampalatayang Misyonero" (Christmas of the Faithful Filipino Missionaries). In addition the Filipino Community, would like to thank Father Maxim Cardoza, Father Troy De Los Santos, and all the other priest members of Saint Paul's Church Musaffah for their continued support and guidance for our yearly Simbang Gabi. As we come together in faith, let the vast desert skies witness the sincerity of our hearts. Hope to see you there!

Maria Rina



From the book of 'Acts of the Apostles' - Chapters 25 to 28

- 1) "To Caesar you will go" – who said this to Paul?
- 2) When Paul described the light he saw on the way to Damascus, to what did he compare?
- 3) Who was "Julius of the Cohort Augusta"?
- 4) At the island of Malta, what got fastened to the hands of Paul?
- 5) Write the last verse of the book of "Acts of the Apostles"

Your answers along with your name, age and contact details shall be submitted at the parish office on or before 1st January 2024.

OR

Email: voiceofstpauls@gmail.com

Winners of Bible Quiz November-2023

- 1) S.Stefano
- 2) S. Stenaff

Dec 3 St. Francis Xavier feast

Dec 7 Baptism seminar at 7.45 pm

Dec 8 Immaculate Conception of B.V. Mary

Dec 25 Nativity of Our Lord

Dec 26 St Stephen the First Martyr

Dec 27 St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

Dec 28 Holy Innocents

Dec 29 Priestly Ordination- Fr. Mathews and Fr. Tom

Dec 29 Wedding Anniversary Thanksgiving Mass

Dec 31 Holy Family of Jesus Mary and Joseph

Church Events

This Is Your 2023 Advent Calendar

03
Dec

First
Sunday

10
Dec

Second
Sunday

17
Dec

Third
Sunday

24
Dec

Fourth
Sunday





ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH ABU DHABI- UAE

MASS SHCEDULE CHRISTMAS 2023 & NEW YEAR 2024

CHRISTMAS 2023 MASSES

24/12/2023	04.00 PM	MALANAKARA MASS - HALL
	06.00 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	07.00 PM	FRENCH MASS - HALL
	07.30 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	09.00 PM	MALAYALAM MASS - CHURCH
	11.00 PM	CAROL SINGING
	11.30 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
25/12/2023	06.00 AM	MALAYALAM MASS - CHURCH
	08.00 AM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	09.30 AM	KONKANI MASS - CHURCH
	11.00 AM	TAGALOG MASS - CHURCH
	12.30 PM	ARABIC MASS - CHURCH
	05.00 PM	TAMIL MASS - CHURCH
	07.00 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH

N.B. 15 minutes before every Christmas Mass the choir can start the Carol Singing.

NEW YEAR 2024 MASSES

31/12/2023	06.00 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	07.00 PM	MALANAKARA MASS - HALL
	07.30 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	09.00 PM	MALAYALAM MASS - CHURCH
	11.00 PM	THANKSGIVING ADORATION
	11.45 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
01/01/2024	07.00 AM	MALAYALAM MASS - CHURCH
	09.00 AM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	10.30 AM	KONKANI MASS - CHURCH
	12.00 PM	TAGALOG MASS - CHURCH
	05.00 PM	TAMIL MASS - CHURCH
	07.00 PM	ENGLISH MASS - CHURCH
	07.00 PM	SINHALA MASS - HALL

N.B.: On Dec. 23rd & 30th Saturday evening Obligatory Masses will be held at usual timings and Dec. 24th & 31st Sunday Obligatory Masses will be held at usual timings till 12 Noon.

Parish Priest, Assistant Priests, Parish Council Members & Editorial Team wish you and your family Merry Christmas & Prosperous New year-2024

2024

Photo Corner



All Saints feast by Catechism Children Held on 05-Nov-2023



Symbols of the Advent Wreath

Circular shape

Reminds us that God has no beginning and no end, He is one and eternal.

Pink candle

Lit on Gaudete Sunday, it symbolizes joy as we approach the birth of Jesus.

4 candles

The 4 Sundays of Advent. When we light each one we are reminded that the light of Jesus is coming into the world.

Green branches

Green symbolizes hope and life. It reminds us that Christ lives among us.



Wedding Anniversary Mass during the month of November-2023



Birthday of Fr. Divakar 15-Nov-2023



Feast of Christ The King Celebration 25-Nov-2023 (Malayalam Community)



CHARIS NATIONAL SERVICE OF COMMUNION-UAE

4TH CHARIS INTER-PARISH

BIBLE QUIZ 2023 (20TH AUIPBQ)

"I treasure your word in my heart, so that
I may not sin against you." (Ps 119:11)



22nd October 2023
St. Paul's Church Musaffah - UAE

WINNERS FROM ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

CHILDREN-ENGLISH- 1ST PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



AARON REESON



FARON GLITTO



JIANA MARY TONIO

FAMILY-MALAYALAM- 2ND PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



BENNY JOSEPH & FAMILY

SENIORS-ENGLISH- 1ST PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



JUDI JOSEPH



JAIN MATHAI



LIPSY RINTO

ADULTS-MALAYALAM- 2ND PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



NEETHU JOMY



MARY MABLE
THOMAS



NEETHU GEORGE

ADULTS-ENGLISH- 2ND PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



MARIA SANDOU



JENCIES JAISON



JOBIN RODRIGUES

SENIORS-KONKANI- 1ST PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



JERALD D MONIS



JYOTHE VEENA



PRIYA SARITHA

FAMILY-TAGALOG - 3RD PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



JAYR MENDOZA - HERNA MENDOZA

ADULTS-KONKANI- 1ST PRIZE ST. PAUL'S-MUSAFFAH



RENITA DSOUZA



QUEENCY REBEIRO



ARON D'SOUZA