

ST GERARD'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Bulletin

8944 ELBOW DRIVE SW CALGARY AB T2V 1L2

TEL 403 253 2251

WEBSITE: STGERARDS.CA

December 24, 2023



4th Sunday of Advent

Key events Coming Soon:

- **4th Sunday of Advent Mass December 23 5pm**
- **4th Sunday of Advent Mass December 24, 9 am & 11 am**
- **Christmas Eve Mass December 24, 5 pm (kids) & 8 pm**
- **Christmas Day December 25, 10 am**
- **Christmas Day Potluck Lunch December 25**
- **NO Adoration, NO mass December 26**
- **No mass December 27**
- **Regular mass resumes Dec. 28-29 at 9 am**
- **The Holy Family Mass December 30 at 5 pm**
- **The Holy Family Mass December 31 at 9 am and 11 am**
- **Solemnity of Mary Mass, Sunday, December 31 at 5pm**
- **Solemnity of Mary Monday, January 1 at 10 am**
- **No mass, January 2, and January 3**

MASS TIMES

Tuesday 6:30 pm

Wednesday - Friday 9:00 am

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 am

ADORATION

Tuesday 5:00 - 6:00 pm

First Fridays 9:30 - 10:10 am

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 4:00 - 4:45 pm

PARISH TEAM

Pastor: Fr. Ignatius Tran

fr.tran@stgerards.ca

Deacon: Rob McLean

Robert.McLean@calgarydiocese.ca

Gay Abuan-Summers

Pastoral Program Coordinator

Pastoral Related Inquiries:

pastoral.coordinator@stgerards.ca

Caroline Conley

Administrative Assistant

General Inquiries:

frontdesk.admin@stgerards.ca

Gordon Skaluba, Maintenance

WEBSITE: www.stgerards.ca

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday:

9 am to 12 pm (noon)

Closed noon - 1 pm (*lunch break*)

Afternoons **by appointment only:**

from 1 pm - 4:30 pm

Closed Holidays



Dear friends,

We are getting so close to Christmas and everyone's excited! This Sunday starts the fourth week of Advent. But as you all know, the fourth week Advent this year only has one day, that's Sunday. We will light the fourth candle- the candle of Love.

Love is what Christmas is all about. **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but**

have eternal life. "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. John 3:16

St. Augustine said, "God loves *each of us* as if there was only *one of us* to love."

We cannot be Christians without love: love for God and love for each other:

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:7-8).

I came across this moving story and wanted to share it with you at this time:

Two Babies In A Manger

In 1994, two Americans answered an invitation from the Russian Department of Education to teach morals and ethics (based on biblical principles) in the public schools. They were invited to teach at a large orphanage. About 100 boys and girls who had been abandoned, abused, and left in the care of a government-run program were in the orphanage. They relate the following story in their own words:

It was nearing the holiday season, 1994, time for our orphans to hear, for the first time, the traditional story of Christmas. We told them about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem. Finding no room in the inn, they went to a stable, where the baby Jesus was born and placed in a manger. Throughout the story, the children and orphanage staff sat in amazement as they listened.

Completing the story, we gave the children many things to build their own manger. The orphans were busy assembling their manger as I walked among them to see if they needed any help. All went well until I got to one table where little Misha sat. He looked to be about 6 years old and had finished his project. As I looked at the little boy's manger, I was startled to see not one, but two babies in the manger. Quickly, I called for the translator to ask the lad why there were two babies in the manger. Crossing his arms in front of him and looking at this completed manger scene, the child began to repeat the story very seriously. For such a young boy, who had only heard the Christmas story once, he related the happenings accurately – until he came to the part where Mary put the baby Jesus in the manger. Then Misha started to ad-lib. He made up his own ending to the story as he said,

And when Maria laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told him I have no mamma and I have no papa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus told me I could stay with him. But I told him I couldn't, because I didn't have a gift to give him like everybody else did. But I wanted to stay with Jesus so much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. I thought maybe if I kept him warm, that would be a good gift. So I asked Jesus, 'If I keep you warm, will that be a good enough gift?' And Jesus told me, 'If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody ever gave me.' So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and he told me I could stay with him—for always.

As little Misha finished his story, his eyes brimmed full of tears that splashed down his little cheeks. Putting his hand over his face, his head dropped to the table and his shoulders shook as he sobbed and sobbed. The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon or abuse him, someone who would stay with him – ALWAYS. I've learned that it's not WHAT you have in your life, but WHO you have in your life that counts.

By Will Fish (Quoted from various sources on the web)

I sincerely *hope* that little Misha did find a loving family to adopt him. I can say for certain that he did find *the love* of Jesus. We will never understand the depth of God's love for us. He loves us *without condition* regardless of what's going on in our lives, regardless of the challenges that we are facing. We are never alone or without help.

YOU are a LOVED child of God- always and forever. Celebrate!

*In Faith,
Fr. Ignatius*

Christmas and New Year Mass Times:

Saturday, December 23 (4th Sunday of Advent) - **5 pm**

Sunday, December 24 (4th Sunday of advents) - **9 am and 11 am**

Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve): **5 pm (Children's Choir), 8 pm**

Monday, December 25 (Christmas Day) - **10 am**

Tuesday, December 26 - **No adoration and no Evening Mass**

Wednesday, December 27 - **NO MASS *important change*!**

Thurs – Fri December 28-29 at **9:00 am**

Saturday, December 30 (Holy Family Feast) - **5 pm**

Sunday, December 31 (Holy Family Feast) - **9 am and 11 am**

Sunday, December 31 (New Year's Eve, Mary, Mother of God Feast) - **5 pm**

Monday, January 1, 2024 (New Year's Day, Mary, Mother of God Feast) - **10 am**

Tuesday, January 2, 2024 **No adoration and no Evening Mass**

Wednesday, January 3, 2024 **NO MASS**

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR Office Hours:

December 22 -29 Office open from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm only.

Office is Closed: Christmas day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

December 25, 26

and January 1, 2024 (New Years Day)

Office hours resumes January 2, 2024

Our Weekly Financial Pulse as of December 22, 2023:



On-target, WOW! Fr. Ignatius' encouragement pays off.

Thank you for your generosity and helping the parish hit our TIA goal.

We are now at 107%! Excess amount from the TIA collection will go towards St. Vincent de Paul outreach program in our parish.



General donations are still in the **Red**. Help us get back to Black.

Our Financial Picture General and TIA Collections



December 2023 - Weekly Target:
\$8,184 vs actual weekly collections

- Dec. 3 \$13,120 (**over - \$4,936**)
- Dec. 10 \$12,766 (**over - \$4,582**)
- Dec. 17 \$21,937 (**over - \$13,753**)

Make your 2023 donation count!

Donations must be received by December 31st, cheques and e-transfers. Anything over \$20/ year is eligible for a tax receipt. Please include your **name & address.**

- For on-line giving, visit:
<https://stgerards.ca/donate>

ENVELOPES



Pick up below the Nativity scene at the entrance.

- Use your **new Number** only
- See envelopes in pews for electronic donation, **visitors** and **altar flowers.**

Have you officially registered to become a member of our parish? Sign up today! <https://stgerards.ca/becoming-a-registered-member> ; Thank you for your support and generosity.

Celebrating Life – Birthday and Wedding Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to all December celebrants including...



December 23 – Ab Smith

December 25 – Paul Willis, Maricris Blanco

December 28 – Wally Smelski

MASS INTENTIONS – DECEMBER 2023 **RIP – Rest In Peace; SI – Special Intentions

Tuesday, December 26 – 9 AM	No Mass	
Wednesday, December 27 – 9 AM	No Mass	
Thursday, December 28 – 9 AM	Araneta Family	SI
Friday, December 29 – 9 AM	Ab Smith	SI
Saturday, December 30- 5:00 PM	Donkers Family	SI
Sunday, December 31- 9 AM	Abuan-Summers Family	SI
Sunday, December 31- 11 AM	All Parishioners of St. Gerard's	SI

2024 Sunday & Youth Missals *Now Available*

The Sunday Missal has the complete text of the Mass. Follow along with the all prayers, readings, and responses said during the Mass.

Available at the Hospitality Desk

Sunday Missal \$5, Youth Missals \$10

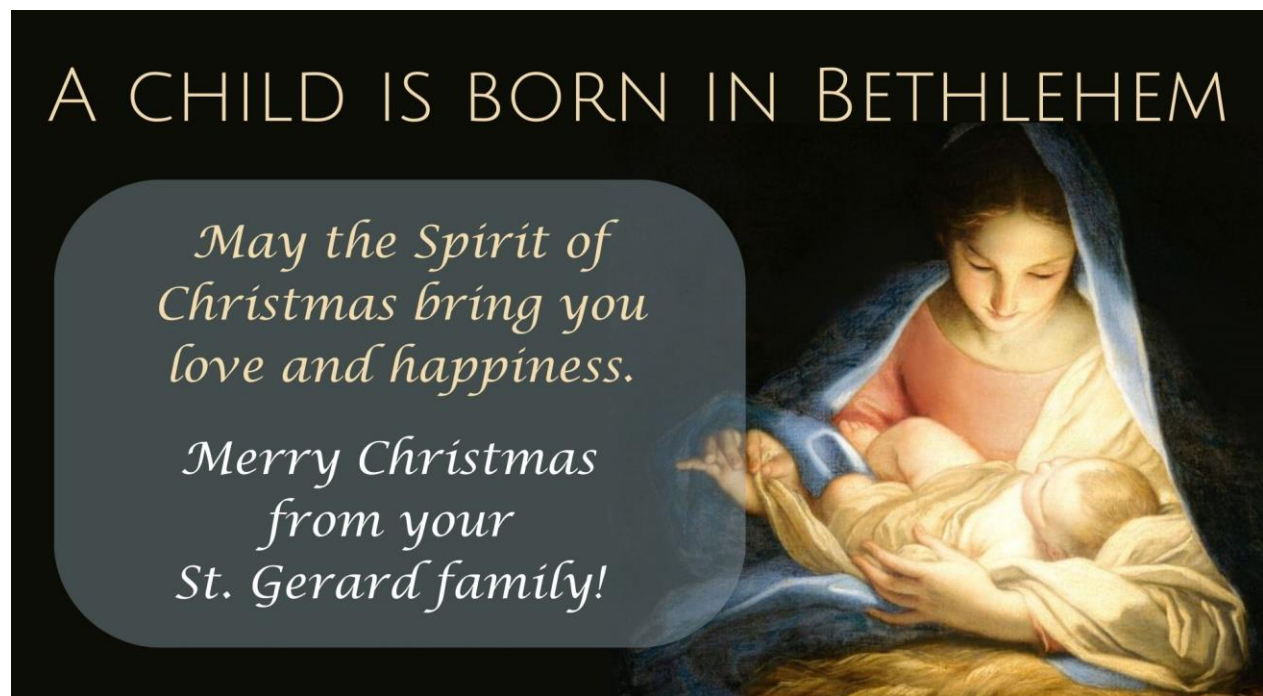
The Society of Saint Vincent De Paul says Thank you.



Thank you, Parishioners, for supporting our Christmas Hamper program this year. Over 115 families received a hamper. Thanks to you over 240 adults and 150 children had a brighter Christmas season. Special thanks to the children of St Stephens who provided individualized Christmas cards to each family. Thank you for your continued support.

Christmas Day Buffet - December 25

Thank you to all who signed up for the potluck. See you after the 10 am mass.



Christmas Note Cards - Available at the Entrance or Hospitality desk

The Diocese provides Christmas note cards for you to use in conveying care to others this Advent and Christmas. Here are some ideas on how to use them:

- You can convey God's love and care to colleagues at work by leaving these cards at their desks, either signed or anonymously.
- Students, parents, guardians, and teachers can share these cards with others in their schools.
- These cards can be inserted into Christmas cards and gift boxes.
- They could be shared with a stranger who seems down or burdened.



Look for these cards in your parish before Christmas!

Click to view information from the Diocese of Calgary

- **Dec 25** | [Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord](#) - Parishes in Calgary
- **Dec. 26 - 30** | Octave of the Nativity
 - **Dec. 26** | Feast of St. Stephen
 - **Dec. 27** | Feast of St. John
 - **Dec. 28** | Feast of the Holy Innocent
- **Dec. 30/31** | Feast of The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Sunday Mass) - [Mass Finder](#)
- **Jan 1** | [Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God](#) - Parishes in Calgary | [World Day of Peace](#)
- **Jan 2-8** | Season of Christmas
- **Jan 5-7** | [Young Adult Retreat](#) - Mount St. Francis, Cochrane
- **Jan 6/7** | Epiphany of the Lord (Sunday Mass) - [Mass Finder](#)
- **Fri, Jan 12** | [Fun Night with Sisters](#)

KIDS Bulletin – 4th Sunday of ADVENT

- [Kid's Bulletin this Sunday](#)