

Grow as a disciple | pray, study, engage, serve

Grow: Although spontaneous outbursts of joy are not part of our liturgy, today's readings alert us that we have much reason to rejoice. Even in times of anxiety, we can rely on the words of St. Paul, who writes that we can rest assured that "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard [our] hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." As we prepare for his coming during this Advent season, we don't need to leap out of our pews and make a show of our praise (but go for it, if that's your style!). However, in our hearts and in our prayer, we can follow the psalmist's lead and "cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel." We can praise God in many ways, through fervent prayer, simple acts of kindness and, as John the Baptist did so well, sharing the Good News.



Go Evangelize: prayer, invitation, witness, accompaniment

Go: "What should we do?" The crowds asked John the Baptist a deceptively simple question many of us wrestle with today. How do we prepare for Christ's coming? How should we spend the next hour, the day, the next year, the next five? John the Baptist answers without reservation: Share what you have. Don't be greedy. Do not falsely accuse others. In other words, get it together! The Lord is coming. Advent is a wonderful time to do just that, and St. Paul reminds us that we don't have to know all the answers. "The Lord is near," he writes, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." Last week, the readings encouraged us to discern what is truly valuable in our lives as Christians. Today's readings encourage us to ask the Lord: "What should we do?" Just as John the Baptist showed the people how to prepare for Christ's coming, the Lord shows us how to live out and share our faith through the Scriptures and in the silence of prayer.

Action: Remember the last time you felt unadulterated joy? For me it was when my son smacked a game-winning goal at a hockey game. As we move through Advent, we can reawaken a sense of childlike joy as we prepare to celebrate Christ among us. As you light the Advent candle, take time to share with one another something that gave you joy within the past week.

We ask you to pray...

Please pray for those who have died, especially Mike Musselman and Sylwester Checinski.

Please pray for those are sick, especially Norma McIver, Alfred Heinbuck, Hermina Reurink, Claire Nicholson and Pauline Patterson.

Please pray for vocations, especially this coming week for Maria Lange (Pastoral Worker), Jean Beneteau (Pastoral Minister), Marguerite Hewer (Pastoral Minister), Fr. Christophe Mbunzu, Deacon Brian MacDonald, ministers to migrant workers in our Diocese, Fr. Augustine Ogundele, religious communities, Bishop Fabbro, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Dabrowski, and Pope Francis.



Mass Schedule and Intentions for the week of December 13—18

Tuesday - 7:00 pm. at St. Joseph's Church

- 1. Jackie Britton Joe Moss & family
- 2. Andreas & Gary Schnuerer Otilie Schnuerer
- 3. Victoria Mercer Annie Chisholm

Wednesday - 8:00 am. at Immaculate Conception Church

- 1. Elsie (anniv.) & John Conroy Janet Conroy
- 2. Sr. Anne McCarty (IBVM) & Reid Sidwell (anniv.) Fran Purcell
- 3. Robert Hertel Lorraine Hertel & family

Thursday - 10:00 am. at Holy Name of Mary Church

- 1. Inez Haid Rob & Maureen Leyser
- 2. Antonio Sacco His family
- 3. Dec'd members of the Flanagan family

Friday - 8:00 am. at St. Joseph's Church

- 1. Leo W. Stock Debbie Stock & family
- 2. Ellen Hopper (the late) Marj Vere
- 3. Regena Whaling Frank Whaling

Sacraments

Confession times:

Saturdays: 11:00 am. —noon at St. Joseph's church &
4:00 pm. —4:30 pm. at Immaculate Conception church.

Sundays: 9:00 am.—9:30 am. at Holy Name of Mary church.
(or by appointment by calling the office and speaking with one of the priests.)

Baptisms - Baptisms are celebrated on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 1:00 pm. with the preparation class held the Tuesday evening before at 7:40 pm. Please call the office and register your child, or email Elizabeth at emanto@dol.ca or Mary at mchisholm@dol.ca

First Reconciliation Preparation begins January, 2022.

First Holy Communions - Completed for 2021

Confirmation - Preparation begins January, 2022.

Weddings—should be booked six months to a year in advance by calling either church office to speak with one of the priests.

Parish Groups

Mission News — a note from Jim and Marg Brickman:

We are thrilled to report that our online silent auction for the ongoing work of Project Precious Haiti was a huge success. We were able to raise \$4,874.

We continue to be humbled by the amazing generosity of so many wonderful people.

We, along with the Haitian people, are so truly grateful for the ongoing support in helping to keep the much needed HOPE alive in Haiti.

We are also selling RheoThompson's mint smoothie bars for \$3.00. These bars make great stocking stuffers for Christmas or a nice treat for yourself. If you would like to purchase any, you may call us at 519-273-1838 or send us an email at projectprecioushaiti@gmail.com

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul —

We continue to take donations for **The Giving Tree Program**. Please take one or more of these tags, purchase the gift card(s), and return to the offertory collection boxes. Parishioners that are unable to access the Giving Tree and would still like to participate, please drop any denomination of gift card(s) from Walmart, No Frills, and/or Food Basics in a clearly marked envelope into the locked secure box on the right outside the Parish Office.

This program enables parents to purchase a gift for their child aged 17 or under and provides families with a grocery gift card - all to help celebrate the Christmas Season. We sincerely appreciate all of the support from our Parishes.

St. Joseph's CWL —

If anyone is interested in sending Christmas greetings to our brothers and sisters in the armed forces, you can mail a card to; Canadian Forces Member P.O. Box 5140 Station Forces, Belleville, ON K8N 5W6





Diocesan News

Living the Vision: Mission-Oriented Action

In your Parish: Reach out and get to know the name of a person or family that you don't know.

In your Home: Be hospitable to all who visit.

In your Heart: Seek the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Diocese of London: Being a Mission-Oriented Church that Forms Disciples of Jesus

Christmas Flower Memorials We invite parishioners to participate in our tradition of making a donation toward the purchase of flowers in memory of their deceased loved ones. As a special way to honour your deceased family and friends, these flowers will decorate all 3 of our churches during the entire Christmas season.

Please complete the form below and drop it in the collection basket at one of the churches or to the lock box outside the office door at St. Joseph's. You may also leave the name of your deceased love one(s) by calling the office or emailing Mary at mchisholm@dol.ca or Elizabeth at emanto@dol.ca and etransfer the Parish as follows:

St. Joseph: stjosephstrat@dol.ca **Immaculate Conception:** immaculatec@dol.ca

Holy Name of Mary: hnmstmarys@dol.ca ****please put 'Christmas Flowers' in the message line.**

We will display the names of our deceased loved in sanctuary by the flowers.

(Please print clearly—thank you)

Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Envelope Number: _____

In Memory of: _____

Donation: \$ _____ Parish: _____



AVON-THAMES CATHOLIC FAMILY OF PARISHES

Website: www.avonthamescatholic.dol.ca

Email: avonthamescatholic@dol.ca

Parish Family Office:

96 Huron Street, Stratford ON N5A 5S6

Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Phone: 519-271-6722 Stratford or

519-284-2593 St. Marys

Staff are working from the office - Access by appointment

DONATE

During these difficult times
your financial support is appreciated:

Holy Name of Mary: <https://dol-hnom.plenty.com/>

Immaculate Conception: <https://dol-ic.plenty.com/>

St. Joseph's: <https://dol-sjcc.plenty.com/>

To e-transfer, please email Maureen or leave a message
at Extension 23.