

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

Grow:

For cradle Catholics, baptism may be the most important step on the Christian journey that none of us actually remembers. Which is too bad! After all, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* instructs us that baptism is “the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit.” (#1213) Yes, baptism cleanses us of original sin, but it’s much more than that! We need only look to Jesus to see that. Though without sin, Jesus’ baptism is a turning point in his life all the same. The Holy Spirit descends upon him and a voice from heaven cries out, “You are my beloved Son.” So begins the public ministry, in which Jesus would carry out his Father’s saving mission. Through our baptism, at any age, we, too, become God’s beloved sons and daughters. Through word and sacrament, Jesus invites us to share in his mission by turning our lives over to our Father as we embrace our Christian journey.

Go evangelize | Prayer, invitation, witness, accompaniment

Go:

Baptism is often referred to as “the doorway to the Church” because through this sacrament, our sins are forgiven and we are united to Christ and his Church. It is the door which gives access to all the other sacraments. (Cf., CCC 1213) At the conclusion, the celebrant asks God to continue to pour out his blessing upon those being baptized, and send his peace to all who are gathered. As baptized Christians, we are now adopted children of God; we are disciples who are empowered, through the wisdom and strength of the Holy Spirit, to share the Good News and help build the kingdom of God on earth. Sound intimidating? It shouldn’t. Each day that we “put on Christ” and do his work, God is re-creating us and making us into something far better than we could ever be on our own. Embrace this faith you have been given and go out and share your gifts and talents with others, confident in the Spirit that guides you.

Serve:

Think of something you have been told you are very good at by friends or coworkers – something for which you have been “anointed,” in a sense. In what way can you do something specific to lead others with care in this area, or perhaps do a very particular good yourself?

We ask you to pray...

Please pray for those who have died, especially Anna Juhasz and Joan Graham.

Please pray for those are sick, especially Claire Nicholson and Pauline Patterson.

This list will be cleared bi-monthly. If you wish to remain on the list please call Mary at the office. (519-271-6722 ext. 24)

Please pray for vocations, especially this coming week for Sr. Marija Ivic (Pastoral Minister), Fr. Jozef Denys, Fr. Francis Thekkumkattil, Cathryn Hall (Pastoral Minister), Fr. Michael Parent, Sr. Mary Boere (Pastoral Minister), Fr. Jude Ogbenna, for religious communities, Bishop Fabbro, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Dabrowski, and Pope Francis.



Mass Schedule and Intentions for the week of January 10—14

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

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Peter Bokkers | Annie Bokkers and family |
| 2. Danny Cooley | Jim & Marlene Kelly and family |
| 3. Maureen & Ross Smith | Their family |

Wednesday - 8:00 am. at Immaculate Conception Church

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| 1. Ellen Hopper | Wally Ebner |
| 2. Regena Whaling | Frank Whaling |
| 3. Assuntina Colangelo | Rita & Mike Vittoria |

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

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| 1. Jackie Britton | Joe Moss & family |
| 2. Wilma Healy | Her family |
| 3. Gary Herman | Nancy Herman |

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

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|---|----------------|
| 1. Rita & Ray Morin | Kel Pero |
| 2. Deceased family & friends of Anna & Andrew Checinska | |
| 3. Intentions of Mary Kay Lobsinger | Patti Rothwell |

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 February, 2022.

First Holy Communions - Completed for 2021

Confirmation - Preparation begins with virtual parent meetings on Saturday, January 15th or Wednesday, January 19th. Letters and registration forms have been sent out to Catholic elementary school. For more

Parish Groups

Knights of Columbus: 50/50 Raffle—

The final draw for 2021 will be on December 31, 2021. The raffle continues quarterly into 2022.

Tickets can be purchased using the same URL or QR code as before. It will not change. Posters are at all three churches. <https://ontariokofcraffle.5050central.com/?olc=1431>

St. Joseph's CWL —

The St. Joseph's CWL will be postponing the Installation of the 2022/2024 Executive until a later date.

All St. Joseph's CWL Executive and General meetings are also postponed. Please check the bulletin or Flocknotes for updates.

Development and Peace—

Let's listen to the voices of our brothers and sisters fighting for their right to a healthy environment.

World leaders gathered for the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26). Although these powerful decision-makers debated the future of the planet, many are too far removed from the realities of its most vulnerable people. It is up to us to hear and amplify the voices of those who are defending their rights and the environment against economic ravage.

Medarda Hernandez, whose community in Honduras has been repeatedly harmed by large industrial projects, including supposedly "green" projects, says, "if other extractivist projects start in our community, we are not going to let them pass. I ask the international community to come to our aid, because we are really suffering from this situation."

So that people like Medarda do not go unheard, let's make Canadian companies operating abroad responsible for protecting human and environmental rights. Join Development and Peace's People and Planet First campaign to make this happen. Visit <https://devp.org/en> to learn more.

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.

Baptism of the Lord

Christmas Time comes to its close when we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord, an event recorded in all four Gospels.

To begin his public ministry, Jesus presented himself to be baptized by John the Baptist, and God manifested Jesus as the Divine Son. Because we associate baptism with the forgiveness of sins, the idea that the sinless Jesus would undergo baptism seems out of place. The evangelists must have thought the same; as a whole, they downplay the incident. But the baptism of Jesus had nothing to do with forgiveness; it had everything to do with manifestation.

It was a new beginning because it publicly revealed Jesus' identity, and that testimony came not from just any witness but from God. Three incidents in the Bible are traditionally called the "epiphany" events or the "manifestations" of Jesus, newly arrived on the biblical scene: the visit of the Magi, the baptism, and the miracle at the wedding in Cana. Prior to 1969, we heard all three of these Scriptures in successive weeks: January 6, January 13, and on the following Sunday. All three stories form a unit because they progressively reveal the identity, the authority, and the power of Jesus.

In today's liturgical calendar, the Sunday readings spread over a three-year cycle. On the Baptism of the Lord, we hear a different evangelist's account each year. Only in year C does the following Sunday feature the Gospel of the Wedding Feast at Cana to unify the three celebrations. In Canada, we celebrate Epiphany on a Sunday. But in countries where the Epiphany is a holy day of obligation, it is celebrated on January 6.

