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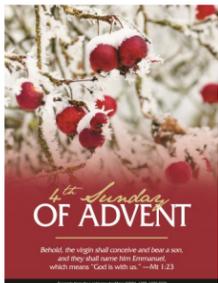
Fourth SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus." Joseph heard these prophetic words in a dream. They were words of anticipation, of what was to come. And in a sense, they ushered in a kind of Advent for Joseph. With this divine message, Joseph began a period of holy waiting. He now knew that the Messiah was going to be coming into his own home, and he had just nine months to prepare! We can only imagine how Joseph might have spent these precious days. Most likely he did more than prepare a physical home for his soon-to-be-born Son; he must have also used these days to prepare his heart, mind, and soul for such a tremendous mission.



Today, we stand in a position not all that different from St. Joseph. We also know that the Messiah will be arriving--not just in remembrance at Christmastime, but in reality at the second coming. But unlike Joseph, we don't have an exact timeframe. We don't know when Jesus will return. We just know that we need to be ready!

During the season of Advent we are challenged to recall this fact and strive to get our hearts in order. The days are short now until Christmas, and for all we know they might be short until Christ's return as well. What remains to be done? Aside from wrapping presents and planning parties, where do we yet need to tidy up our habits to properly celebrate the real meaning of this festive season? How can we make sure that we don't get swept away in the external preparations, forgetting the work that needs to be done in the invisible silence of our souls? God may not speak to all of us directly in our dreams, but he does speak to us clearly through his word. May we recognize today the mission he has laid before us.



Last Days of Advent
 Saint Pope John Paul II, Dec. 18, 2002: Saint Pope John Paul II in his address on Dec. 18, 2002 said, "The liturgy of Advent... helps us to understand fully the value and meaning of the mystery of Christmas. It is not just about commemorating the historical event, which occurred some 2,000 years ago in a little village of Judea. Instead, it is necessary to understand that the whole of our life must be an 'advent,' a vigilant awaiting of the final coming of Christ. To predispose our mind to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, one day will come to judge the living and the dead, we must learn to recognize him as present in the events of daily life. Therefore, Advent is, so to speak, an intense training that directs us decisively toward him who already came, who will come, and who comes continuously."

It is so easy to get caught up in the externals of Christmas. Obviously they help to make this season so special. We enjoy the colored lights, the food, the cards, the Christmas carols, the presents, and the Christmas trees. It is important, however, to take the time to focus on what we are celebrating: God's love manifested in the Son of God becoming human and sharing life with us and for us. The Almighty and Eternal God has chosen to enter history and limit Himself in the person of Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary. It was a total absurdity for those to whom the event was first announced and proclaimed. We cannot take it for granted. We must try to comprehend how awesome the Incarnation of Jesus is.

Offertory December 10th & 11th, 2016

87 Envelopes	\$1,793.35
Loose Collection	\$ 92.00
Total Offertory	\$1,885.35
Christmas Flowers	\$ 739.00

**Sunday, December 18th, 2016
 Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." — Mt 1:20-21

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Sat. Dec 17	9-10am	Reconciliation
	4-4:45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Reconciliation
Sun. Dec 18	5:00pm	Missa Pro Populo
	9:30am	✠ Ugo & Antonietta Scurci (Scurci, Devine & Gregoris Fam.)
	11:00am	✠ Renato Rolando Ferrara (Ferrara Family)
Mon. Dec 19	9:30am	Health for Stephanie Anthony (Gloria Egert)
	7:00pm	Holy Hour & Reconciliation
Tues. Dec 20	9:30am	✠ Craig Mooren (Mooren Family)
Wed. Dec 21	9:30am	Blessings & Health for Steve Racz (Lisa Racz)
	7-9pm	Confessions
Thurs. Dec 22	9:30am	✠ Mary Voogt (Voogt & Green Families)
Fri. Dec 23	9:30am	✠ Margaret Marshall (Mike & Anne Young)
Sat. Dec 24	9-10am	Reconciliation
	4-4:45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Reconciliation
		Christmas Eve Masses
	5:00pm	✠ Wally & Sophie Paterak (Christine Meyo & Family)
	8:00pm	✠ Emil Miklavcic (Family)
Sun. Dec 25		Midnight Mass
	12:00am	✠ Deceased Members of the Plesko & Bajuk Families (Ivanka & Frank Plesko)
		Christmas Day Mass
	11:00am	✠ Missa Pro Populo

Reconciliation from 9-9:20am before all weekday Masses.
 As noted above, an extra two hours of Confessions have been added on **Wednesday, December 21st from 7-9pm** to provide an additional opportunity for those who wish to receive this important Sacrament before Christmas.

Christmas Mass Schedule 2016/17



Monday Dec 26th
 Tuesday, Dec 27th -
 Thursday Dec 29th
 Friday, Dec 30th

Mass & Holy Hour Cancelled

9:30am Regular Weekday Mass
9:30am Mass Feast of Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
9-10am Confessions
4-4:45pm Holy Hour & Reconciliation
5:00pm Vigil Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God
9:30 & 11am Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God

Saturday, Dec 31st

Sunday, Jan 1st



Church Decorating for Christmas: If you can spare some time on **Friday, December 23rd, at 10am,** please help us decorate for the Christmas season. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated!

Christmas Caroling Sunday Dec. 18th. Join us as we sing songs of the season by candle light spreading the spirit of Christmas through hymns and traditional songs. We will be meeting at the church at **6:30pm.** Candles and song books will be distributed. Following a short prayer service, we will be walking and carolling in the community and then return to the parish for hot chocolate. Dress warmly!! Join us in celebration of the Christmas season!!

Christmas Trees for Youth Ministry: Once again Branches of the Word (registered charity) will be raising money for Youth Ministry initiatives in our Diocese through the sale of pre-cut, beautiful Christmas Trees. We are well aware that hiring Youth Ministers may not be affordable for many parishes and this is the reason for raising monies, so we, as part of the laity, are helping to make this possible. In addition, we have plans to bring a dynamic Youth speaker to our Diocese in the new year and this can be expensive.

Ushers Needed for Dec. 24th, 5pm Christmas Eve Mass: If you are planning to attend please assist with helping parishioners find seating. Any assistance would be appreciated. Please note that extra chairs from the church hall should be limited to one row behind the back pews. No chairs should be placed in the aisles. Thank you.



We welcome the following in Baptism: **Abrielle June Gilbert**, daughter of Brandon Gilbert & Natalie Wilbur & **Kendall Rose Gilbert**, daughter of Corey Gilbert & Kirsten Osterlund. May the gifts which Baptism bestows, grow unhindered in us all.

Parish Calendar

December.....
Dec 18th..... Christmas Carolling 6:30pm
Dec 21st..... Last Youth Ministry Session for 2016
Dec 21st..... Confessions 7-9pm
Dec 23rd.... Decorating for Christmas, 10am
Dec 26th -30th... Office closed

Euthanasia/Assisted Suicide – Did You Know?

Now that euthanasia/assisted suicide is legal in Canada, doctors in Ontario are being forced to help arrange for the killing of their patients. If your family doctor or surgeon objects to providing a referral for assisted suicide/euthanasia, they could be fined, disciplined or even removed from their practice. Many may be forced to retire or move outside of the province if the provincial government does not recognize their freedom of conscience. Please visit www.CanadiansforConscience.ca to learn more and write directly to your Member of Provincial Parliament.

On Wednesday, January 4th, 2017, at 6:30pm, we will be showing the movie, "The Euthanasia Deception" in the church hall. This documentary, which is about an hour long, uses Belgium's 15 year history of doctor assisted suicides to highlight the implications of euthanasia laws and to act as a warning globally. The documentary features powerful testimonies from Belgium and beyond of those devastated with false ideology of a "mercy killing".

2017 Offertory Envelopes: are available in the church hall. Please note that there have been updates made to the offertory numbering system. **FOR THE YEAR 2017, PLEASE USE ONLY THE ENVELOPES ASSIGNED TO YOU FOR THAT YEAR.** This will ensure that donations are credited to the proper person. **If you do not find a box prepared for you, please phone the office.**

Church Contributions: All Church contributions/donations for 2016 must be **received on the weekend of Dec 24th/25th** to be applied to your 2016 tax receipt. All donations received the following weekend will be applied to the 2017 tax receipt. Thank you for your cooperation.

Office Closure for Christmas: The Church Office will be closed from **Monday, December 26th, 2016 to Friday, December 30th, 2016.** Messages may be left at any time and will be checked regularly. **Regular office hours will resume the week of January 2nd, 2017.**

YOUTH MINISTRY: *YM for grades 5-8, Wed. evenings. Last session before the new year will be Dec 21st. Youth Ministry will resume January 11th, 2017. Registration form is on our website <http://stannfenwick.wixsite.com/youthministry>.* If you would like to volunteer, check out our website <http://stannfenwick.wixsite.com/youthministry> or email me gbroadley@branchesoftheword.org

Diocesan Refugee Project: This Christmas, you may wish to consider making a donation in support of the Syrian refugees who are being sponsored by parishes across the diocese. These donations will be distributed to the ongoing work in parishes striving to meet the financial requirements to sponsor a family. Cheques can be made payable to the Diocese of St. Catharines, noting "Diocesan Refugee Ministry" or they can be sent through your parish or by mail to P.O. Box 875, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 6Z4 (income tax receipts will be issued). Donations can also be made by credit card through the diocesan website (CanadaHelps) at www.saintcd.com. **If you would like to make a donation to our own Syrian Refugee initiative, you may do so at any time. In the new year, the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Committee will share updates on this project and how you can be of further assistance.**