

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

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Pastoral Team

Rev. Mark Achilles Villanueva, Pastor

Rev. Michael Ho, Deacon

Rev. Gerry Steyn, Deacon

Cecilia Vaz, Administrative Assistant



prepare the way...



The Fourth week of Advent this year is only a day, not even, just a few hours. It is important that we do not lose sight of the meaning of this fourth Sunday. The day before Advent begun, I asked myself: "What is advent for me?" I knew in my heart that if I was clear about what Advent was for me, there was a greater possibility that this season would become more meaningful for me this year. So, I decided to follow the Carmelite traditional Advent themes of Waiting, Accepting, Journeying,

and Birthing to mark my own observance of this season.

On the first week, I focused on waiting. Waiting on God. I have read somewhere that Advent is about letting God come to us. We do the letting and God does the coming. We simply have to open our lives to His coming.

On the second week, I focused on accepting. Accepting that God does not shy from reaching out to us no matter who we are or what situation we might find ourselves in. If God allowed himself to be born in a stable, surely He will not hesitate to come into our hearts no matter how messy and troubled our hearts may be.

On the third week, I focused on the journeying. The Scriptures are full of stories about people on a journey. The Christmas story itself is full of "journeys." We have Mary traveling to visit Elizabeth, and Joseph and Mary traveling from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register for the census; there are the wise men traversing afar to follow the yonder star. Then, even after the birth of Jesus, there was the escape to Egypt in order to avoid Herod's jealous slaughter. There is a saying by the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Indeed, the first step proceeds the second. So, I asked myself, "What is the one small step that I need to make to be in the path to which God is inviting me?"

And now, on this fourth Sunday, Birthing. One afternoon, when I was 10 years old, my mother asked me to accompany her to church for Mass. She was pregnant at that time. For many years, the whole family always wanted a baby girl. My mother even asked the Cloistered Carmelite Nuns to pray with her for this intention. In those days, there was more suspense than it is today with all the medical technology that we have. Nobody knew. The following morning, as we were waking up, my father announced the good news. We had a baby sister! I remember the joy that we all felt that day forty years past. And so today, I ask myself: "How is Christ and his message of love being born in my heart?"

This evening Christ is born...

Mass Intention

Saturday (December 23)

5:00 PM +Marjo Gasser

Sunday (December 24)

7:30 AM For the Parish Community
 9:00 AM +Monica Cardozo, +John D'Silva
 11:00 AM +Fabiola Giraldo, +Jose Antonio Hasbun
 12:30 PM Special Intention of Joseph D'Souza
 5:00 PM For the Parish Community
 7:00 PM For the Parish Community
 8:30 PM For the Parish Community
 10:30 PM For the Parish Community

Monday (December 25)

9:00 AM For the Parish Community
 11:00 AM For the Parish Community
 12:30 PM For the Parish Community

Tuesday (December 26)

7:30 AM +Evelyn Macalaguim, +Juanito Umali

Wednesday (December 27)

7:00 PM Thanksgiving for Perry & Yasmin, Thanksgiving for Boy Moreno

Thursday, (December 28)

7:30 AM +Albert Martin

Friday (December 29)

7:00 PM +Philomena D'Souza

Saturday (December 30)

5:00 PM Open

If you want to offer Holy Mass for yourself or your Loved One, you can use the form on our parish website or contact Cecilia at the desk or at the parish office. Our Parish also accepts Mission Masses (also commonly known as unannounced masses). These Masses are offered by priests anywhere in the world. Please inquire at the desk.

Please continue to pray for our church building project, for the safety of all our construction workers



Wish List

We will need Life Size Statues for our new Church. Just to give you an idea of what a life size restored statue of St. Joseph costs, for example, \$4000. We still need to identify a statue of our Patron Saint. Since she was recently canonized (the Year 2000), we have no option other than to either have her statue commissioned or import it from Italy. In the meantime if you wish to donate towards the purchase of the Statues, please send in your donations...a pledge form specifically for this purpose is available for you to fill. Thank you.

Update on the Construction of the New Church

I know many of you are asking about when the new church is going to be opened. I was hoping that we will all be celebrating Christmas this year in the new church. As you are all aware, construction does not always happen on schedule as one would like. The materials are not always delivered on time and the trades work longer than anticipated. We have a complicated building to begin with - three octagonal shapes joined together to form a whole. Please be patient. It is better that we have a properly built church than have a building with many headaches than the road. Thank you for your understanding.

A Major Relic of St. Francis Xavier is coming for a visit



A first-degree relic of missionary Saint Francis Xavier is coming to the Archdiocese of Toronto, January 12-14, 2018. The forearm of the saint, permanently displayed at the Church of the Gesù in Rome, will be in Canada from December 29 – February 2, as part of a 14-city Canadian visit. In our archdiocese, the relic will be hosted by St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica (Jan. 12), St. Francis Xavier Church, Mississauga (Jan. 13) and Our Lady

of Lourdes Parish, Toronto (January 14). More information about the visit and a full schedule of events can be found at: www.cco.ca/relic

Organizers believe this is the first time the relic has been on Canadian soil. The body of St. Francis Xavier, which is buried in Goa, India, as well as the relic of his arm, are incorrupt—they have not experienced natural decay since his death in 1552. Organizers expect close to 100,000 people will visit the various events across the country—the same number of people it is believed Francis baptized with his right arm and hand.

Identity in Christ: Young Adult Retreat with the Sisters of Life & Fr. James Brent, OP

January 19-21

Caledon

A weekend retreat for men and women ages 18-35. Delving into questions like "Who am I?" this retreat offers an introduction to prayer, extended times of silence, Eucharistic adoration, Mass on Saturday and Sunday, opportunities for confession and talks given by the Sisters of Life and the Dominican Friars. Please enquire with the Sisters about venue information. COST: By donation CONTACT: The Sisters of Life PHONE: 416-463-2722

Join Fr. Mark on a Tour to England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Amsterdam

Featuring a cruise aboard the "Brilliance of the Seas" - Royal Caribbean Cruises (All cabins - outside oceanview)

June 20 to July 4, 2018

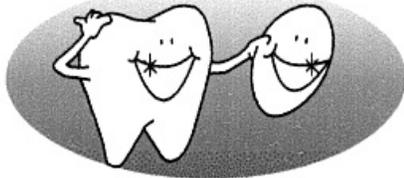
\$4690 (Toronto Departure including taxes and tips)

Travel arrangements by International Heritage Tours, Tel 416-444-6666 contact Stan at ext. 339 or Halina at ext. 315

Volunteer Screening

As part of our effort to make safety a priority in our parish community, all volunteers, staff, including clergy must undergo police check every five years. Agnes Lim has agreed to help facilitate this process for all of us...together with her team of fellow volunteers, they will contact all those involve in ministries and assist in applying for police check. Thank you for your cooperation.

Thank you to all parishioners who have signalled their desire to help in the planning for the Solemn Dedication of the new Church. An **Initial Meeting** will be held on January 9, 2018 at the Parish Rectory starting at 7:30 PM



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