

St. Mark Roman Catholic Parish

55 Driftwood Drive, Kitchener, Ontario N2N 3A2
519-571-9200 | www.stmarkcatholicparish.org

Solemnity of Christmas

the Nativity of the Lord

2021



“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us ...”

JOHN 1:14

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Mass Intentions for the Week December 20 – 27, 2021

Seating is restricted by physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) between households, until further notice. Masks are mandatory. Please stay home if you are feeling unwell.

Tuesday (FERIAL)

12 Noon + Maria Campos – Campos family

Wednesday (FERIAL)

12 Noon + Neil Tschirhart – Garry & Cindy Mahn

Thursday * NO MASS

SOLEMNITY OF CHRISTMAS – THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25

Friday 24th – Christmas Eve

* NO AFTERNOON MASS

6:00 PM + Josip & Ana Zunic – Zunic & Perham families

8:00 PM – Intentions of the Parishioners of St. Mark

10:00 PM + Souls in Purgatory – Amelia DeSousa

Saturday 25th – Christmas Day

9:30 am + Repose of the souls in whose memory donations were made toward Christmas Flowers

11:30 am + Maria Campos – Campos family



FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Colossians 3:12-21; Luke 2:41-52

* NO SATURDAY EVENING MASS

Sunday, December 26th

9:30 am – Int. of Bill & Joyce Stankiewicz – 70th Anniversary

11:30 am – Intentions of the Parishioners of St. Mark

NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

NEW YEAR'S EVE ♦ 5:00 PM

NEW YEAR'S DAY ♦ 10:00 AM

SEATING: ♦ No reservations; First come, first seated
♦ MASKS REQUIRED ♦ Proof of vaccination NOT required
♦ Physical distancing (6ft.) between households



SUNDAY MISSALS 2021-2022

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE IN THE NARTHEX ~ \$5 EACH

"Keep Christ in Christmas" Car Magnets
\$5 EACH IN THE NARTHEX ~ PROCEEDS TO THE C.W.L.

MIDNIGHT MASS TELEVISED ♦ His Excellency, Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, will celebrate Christmas Midnight Mass on December 25, 2021 from the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton. The Mass will be preceded by Carols at 11:30 p.m. on December 24. The Carols and the Mass will be shown live on Salt+Light Television and CHCH-TV. Admittance to the Cathedral for Midnight Mass is by ticket only – a limited number of tickets are still available by contacting the Cathedral at 1-905-522-5744.

VOCATION SEEDS ♦ 4th Sunday of Advent ♦ Dec 19, 2021

Are you called to follow in the footsteps of Mary as a priest, deacon or religious to carry the Good News of God's great Love? Contact Bishop Wayne Lobsinger, Director of Vocations and Priestly Formation, Diocese of Hamilton ... 905-528-7988 | vocations@hamiltondiocese.com | www.hamiltondiocese.com/vocations

Sunday, December 19, 2021 ♦ The Fourth Sunday of Advent

On this the last Sunday before Christmas, our Gospel reading prepares us to witness Christ's birth by showing us how Jesus was recognized as Israel's long-awaited Messiah even before his birth. The Gospel turns our attention from the ministry of John the Baptist to the events that preceded John the Baptist's birth. The story of John the Baptist and his parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, are reported only in Luke's Gospel. Luke pairs the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus, establishing John's early connection to the Messiah.

Our Gospel reading recalls Mary's actions after the announcement of Jesus' birth by the angel Gabriel. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, her cousin, who is also with child. Elizabeth greets Mary with full recognition of the roles that they and their unborn children will play in God's plan for salvation. If we were to continue to read the verses that follow in Luke's Gospel, we would hear Mary respond to Elizabeth's greeting with her song of praise, the Magnificat. Both women recall and echo God's history of showing favor upon the people of Israel.

In Luke's Gospel the Holy Spirit helps reveal Jesus' identity as God to those who believe. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and sings Mary's praise because she bears the Lord. We sing these words of praise to Mary in the Hail Mary. Even John the Baptist, the unborn child in Elizabeth's womb, is said to recognize the presence of the Lord and leaps for joy.

It is appropriate in this season of Advent that we consider the role of Mary in God's plan of salvation. Elizabeth describes Mary as the first disciple, as the one who believed that God's word to her would be fulfilled. Mary's faith enabled her to recognize the work of God in her people's history and in her own life. Her openness to God allowed God to work through her so that salvation might come to everyone. Because of this, Mary is a model and symbol of the Church. May we be like Mary, open and cooperative in God's plan for salvation. ■

December 25, 2021 ♦ The Solemnity of Christmas

Today's liturgy offers the option to read a longer or shorter form of the Gospel. If we read the longer form, we hear Matthew recount the ancestry of Jesus. This genealogy sets Jesus' birth within the context of the history of Israel, highlighting two of Jesus' ancestors—Abraham, the father of the Hebrew people, and David, the most important king of Israel. Jesus' ancestral lineage reinforces a central theme of Matthew's Gospel: Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecies made to the people of Israel.

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. During his betrothal to Mary, Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant. Betrothal in first-century Jewish culture was more than an engagement period; it was part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. If adultery was proved, the punishment might be death. Joseph had rights under Mosaic Law, but he chose to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract so as to protect Mary. The way that Joseph and Mary faced these extraordinary circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God.

The message the angel gave to Joseph in a dream reveals many important theological details about the child Mary will bear and about the child's role in God's plan. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "God saves." He will be the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. He will be Emmanuel, "God with us." This is the mystery we celebrate at Christmas, the Incarnation. God chose to become a human being in the person of Jesus.

Joseph did as the angel of the Lord directed. He took Mary to be his wife and accepted the child in her womb as his own. When Jesus was born, Joseph followed the directions of the angel and gave the child the name Jesus. We often recall Mary's cooperation in God's plan for our salvation. Today's Gospel reminds us of Joseph's important role, which was also crucial to God's plan for Jesus' birth. ■

Donations toward Christmas Flowers for the Church

In the narthex you will find special envelopes and a box to deposit them. Please write the names of your deceased loved ones on the back of the envelope, or include them inside with your donation, then place the envelope in the gift box before Wednesday. The 9:30 Mass on Christmas morning will be celebrated for the Repose of their Souls.



 *Liturgical Ministers*

Sun. Dec. 26	NO SATURDAY EVENING MASS	9:30AM Mass	11:30AM Mass
Reader:		T. Boettger	J. Petrovich
Ushers:		T. Germann L. Koehler	E. Weiss C. Dignam
Eucharistic Ministers:		T. Angel J. Swartz	B./C. Voisin

2022 Offertory Envelopes & Pre-Authorized Debits

Boxes of Offertory Envelopes for 2022 are ready for pick up in the narthex. Each year you are assigned a new I.D. number so **please DO NOT use your 2022 envelopes until January**. Thank you.

If you are enrolled in our pre-authorized debit plan, you will still receive a box of envelopes in order to donate toward special causes (Christmas, Good Friday, World Missions, St. Vincent de Paul, etc.).

If you would like to start using envelopes or enroll in the monthly debit plan (or wish more info) please pick up a form from the information wall in the narthex, or contact Pam at the office to have one emailed to you.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO ST. MARK'S FOR THE 2021 CALENDAR YEAR must reach the parish by Sunday, Dec. 26th
in order to be included on your 2021 tax receipt.
Any donations received after Dec. 26th will be posted to 2022.

Blessing of the Manger

This prayer may be used to bless your Christmas Manger at home:



God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Saviour was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love. Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise up our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Saviour of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

DIOCESAN PRAYER CALENDAR | This week let us pray for...

DEC. 20	DEC. 21	DEC. 22	DEC. 23	DEC. 24
Rev. Pawel Stankiewicz	Rev. Ronald Voisin	Voluntas Dei Institute (i.v.Dei.)	Rev. Meskel Abib Aibu, O.F.M.	Rev. Miro Grubisic, O.F.M.

Prayer for Vocations ... God, the source of creation and love, You invite each of us to serve you through the life which is your gift. May your grace encourage men and women to heights of holiness through service to the Church as priests, sisters, brothers, and lay ministers. Make me an instrument to encourage others to give themselves and challenge me to do the same. Amen.



Thank you to everyone who donated toward flowers for the church, and to those who helped to decorate and prepare the church for Christmas!

May the Blessing of the Lord be with you and your loved ones as you celebrate the birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Wishing everyone a Merry & Blessed Christmas.

- Fr. Steve and Nicholas

ADVENT – O ANTIPHONS

One of the Liturgical indications of the days of preparation for Christmas is the Antiphons for the Cantic of Mary at Evening prayer, called the “O” Antiphons, as “O” begins each one. The Antiphons are also used as the Gospel Acclamation verse for the day. The hymn “O Come, Emmanuel” is based on these Antiphons and is fittingly used at Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. They cover the special period of Advent preparation known as the Octave before Christmas, Dec. 17-23, with Dec. 24 being Christmas Eve and Vespers for that evening being for the Christmas Vigil.

The importance of O Antiphons is twofold: Each one highlights a title for the Messiah: O *Sapientia* (O Wisdom), O *Adonai* (O Lord), O *Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse), O *Clavis David* (O Key of David), O *Oriens* (O Rising Sun), O *Rex Gentium* (O King of the Nations), and O *Emmanuel*. Also, each one refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah.

December 17 ~ O *Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!*

December 18 ~ O *Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!*

December 19 ~ O *Root of Jesse’s stem, sign of God’s love for all his people: come to save us without delay!*

December 20 ~ O *Key of David, opening the gates of God’s eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!*

December 21 ~ O *Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.*

December 22 ~ O *King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!*

December 23 ~ O *Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!*



LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER

The Sanctuary Lamp burns this week for:
† **Parents of Richard & Rosalyn Kress**



You may request to have one or both lamps burn for a special intention or for the repose of someone’s soul. Public intentions will be published in the bulletin and on our website; private intentions will not. Cost is \$5 per candle, per week. Simply drop a plain envelope marked “Sanctuary Lamp” into the collection and include the stipend and the name of the person(s) you wish to remember.

Blessing of the Christmas Tree

Lord our God, we praise you for the light of creation: the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night. We praise you for the light of Israel: the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.


We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son: he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace, who fills us with the wonder of your love. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree. May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts. May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.





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