

St. Louis Catholic Church

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Served by the Congregation of the Resurrection since 1890.

Pastor: Father Phil Reilly, C.R. preilly@hamiltondiocese.com

Parish Secretary: Anna Malton stlouiswaterloo@hamiltondiocese.com

Coordinator of Youth and Children's Ministries: Kelly Krause kkrause@hamiltondiocese.com

Custodian: Doug Lichty

prepare the way...



ADVENT

2025 – YEAR OF JUBILEE – PILGRIMS OF HOPE

MASS INTENTIONS & EVENTS

Monday, December 22			
9 AM – NOON	Pickle Ball		Gym
9 AM – 11 AM	Decorating Church for Christmas		Church
Tuesday, December 23			
9:00 AM	Thanksgiving for Graces Received by Estrada Family – Estrada Family		
Wednesday, December 24			
9 AM – NOON	Pickle Ball		Gym
5:00 PM	For Children of St. Louis Parish		
8:00 PM	For Peace on Earth and Good Will to All		
Thursday, December 25 - Nativity of the Lord			
9:30 AM	For Families of St. Louis Parish		
11:30 AM	For Family Members Who Are Far Away		
Friday, December 26 - St. Stephen, the First Martyr, No Mass			
Saturday, December 27 – St. John the Apostle			
Vigil of Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph			
5:00 PM	† Dr. Paul Horan – Shirley Clairmont		
	† Jack Horan – Shirley Clairmont		
	† John Poechman – Rita Poechman		
Sunday, Dec. 28 - Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph			
9:30 AM	† Bert & Katie Ruetz – Ruetz Family		
	† Don Miller – Miller Family		
11:30 AM	People of St. Louis Parish		
	5 PM	OOTC Community Supper	Gym

From Angelus address to children by St. John Paul II on Sunday, Dec. 17, 1978:

The first 3-D representation of the Crib sprung, as you know, from the brilliant intuition of St Francis of Assisi. Deeply struck and moved by the humility of the Incarnation, on Christmas night in 1223 he got a faithful and pious friend called John to bring to Greccio all that was necessary: straw, hay, the manger and an ox and a donkey in flesh and blood. "I would like"—the Saint said—"to represent the Infant Jesus born in Bethlehem, and to see, so to speak, with the eyes of the body the hardships He suffered for lack of the things a new-born child needs, how He was put in a manger and how He lay in the hay between the ox and the donkey". Various friars came to the place; men and women arrived rejoicing from the lonely cottages in the region, carrying candles and torches to illuminate that night on which, as the biographer notes further, "there shone forth splendid in the sky the Star that illuminated all days and times". A priest celebrated the Eucharist and Francis of Assisi, who was a Deacon, sang the Holy Gospel with his strong, sweet voice, clear and resounding,

From Greccio, which had become like a new Bethlehem, the representation of the Crib, which had sprung from the heart of a Saint, capable of realizing the most sublime poetry in life, spread throughout Italy, Europe and the whole world. It kept intact, in the various expressions of culture and folklore, the fundamental message, truly evangelical, which Francis wanted souls to grasp from contemplation of the Crib, a school of simplicity, poverty, and humility.

Modern society is not always, unfortunately, supporter and messenger of these attitudes, which are sometimes considered even as weaknesses or as frustrations of the human personality. Yet the Son of God, to meet man, to walk by his side, to save him, chose the absolute emptying of His personality, the total lack of means and human instruments, the struggle against pride and arrogance.

As I bless your little statues, beloved children, I think with serene hope of you, of the immense good that you can do, precisely because you are little, within your family, the school, the Associations, and society itself. Not for nothing did Jesus himself choose you as models for those who wish to have a part in His Kingdom (cf. Mt 18:4; Mk

10: 15). May the Infant Jesus, present in the Crib of your home, be the concrete sign of a clear and sincere faith, which will enlighten, guide and direct your life and that of your dear ones.

From Facebook Group Catholic Christianity - Administered by Clive Fernandes · December 24, 2024:

The Role of the Ox and Donkey in the Nativity Scene:

The presence of the ox and donkey in traditional Nativity scenes, while not explicitly mentioned in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth, carries deep symbolic and theological significance. These animals are drawn from biblical imagery and Christian tradition, representing themes of humility, fulfillment of prophecy, and the unity of creation in recognizing Christ as Lord.



The association of the ox and donkey with the Nativity stems from the prophecy in Isaiah: "The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand" (Isaiah 1:3). This verse contrasts the humility and instinctive recognition of animals with the spiritual blindness of humanity. The ox and donkey, by their presence at the manger, symbolize creatures that recognize the divine, while many humans fail to do so.

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint), the word "crib" (*phatne*) is used, which directly connects with the manger where Jesus was laid (Luke 2:7). Early Christians saw this as a prophetic foreshadowing of the Nativity.

The apocryphal Protoevangelium of James (2nd century) describes the presence of animals at Jesus' birth, laying the groundwork for their inclusion in Christian art and Nativity traditions.

St. Augustine and St. Jerome both reflected on the symbolism of the ox and donkey, seeing them as representing Gentiles and Jews, respectively. St. Jerome writes: "The ox and the donkey stand by the crib, signifying the two peoples—Jews and Gentiles—who will come together in Christ." The ox, often seen as a sacrificial animal, represents the Jews under the Law, while the donkey, known for its stubbornness, symbolizes the Gentiles who were far from God but would come to believe in Christ.

The ox and donkey's presence at the manger highlights the universal recognition of Christ's divinity by creation itself. While many humans remained unaware of the Messiah's arrival, these humble creatures symbolize the natural world's acknowledgment of its Creator.

The ox and donkey emphasize the humility of Jesus' birth. The King of Kings was not born in a palace but in a stable, surrounded by animals. Their presence underscores the simplicity and poverty of the Incarnation.

In early Christian art and theology, the manger is often likened to an altar, and Jesus, the "bread of life" (John 6:35), is seen as food for all creation. The ox and donkey, standing by the manger, foreshadow humanity's spiritual nourishment through Christ in the Eucharist.

The ox and donkey challenge modern Christians to recognize Christ in humble and unexpected places. Just as they stood by the manger, we are called to stand by those in need, seeing Christ in the poor and marginalized.

These animals represent unity—Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, all coming together at the feet of Christ. Their presence at the Nativity reminds us of the universal call to salvation and the inclusivity of the Gospel.

The ox and donkey teach us to embrace simplicity in our faith and worship. Their quiet presence at the manger is a model of silent adoration, encouraging us to contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation.

The presence of animals at the Nativity foreshadows the redemption of all creation through Christ. As St. Paul writes: "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God"

DEC. 21, 2025 – ADVENT 4 & DEC. 25, 2025 – CHRISTMAS

(Romans 8:19). The ox and donkey, standing in awe of the newborn Savior, represent creation's joyful anticipation of restoration.

Just as Noah's Ark brought animals into the covenant of salvation, Christ, born among animals, brings all creation into the new covenant. The ox and donkey symbolize this inclusivity and the peace Christ brings to the world.

The ox and donkey, though seemingly minor figures, play a profound role in the Nativity story. They symbolize humility, unity, and the universal recognition of Christ's divinity. Their silent witness calls us to deeper adoration, reminding us that even the simplest aspects of creation proclaim the glory of God. As we reflect on the Nativity, let us emulate the ox and donkey in their quiet yet powerful testimony, recognizing Christ as the center of our lives and the Savior of all creation.

A Closing Mass for the Jubilee Year of Hope will be celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King on Sunday, Dec. 28th, at 3 PM. It will also be the Mass of Thanksgiving offered for Bp. Douglas Crosby, OMI, 15-years of service as Bishop of Hamilton.

Decorating St. Louis Church for Christmas will take place on Monday, Dec. 22nd starting at 9 AM. We will be setting up Christmas trees, the creche, poinsettias, garlands & pew decorations.



First Communion Preparation Classes will start on Wed. Jan. 28th from 6 to 7 PM in the Nursery. If you wish your child to receive their First Communion at St. Louis Parish on May 3rd, 2026 at 9:30 AM Mass, then please contact Kelly Krause to register. (kkrause@hamiltondiocese.com)



The Federation of North-American Explorers (FNE) is an international association of the Catholic Church for youth and young adults that builds its members into saints through an adventurous outdoors program. **Timberwolf FNE program (ages 8-12) is coming to KW area.** The registration is now open. The first meeting is on **Friday, January 30 @ 6:30pm** in St. Paul Catholic Elementary School, 45 Birchcliff Ave, Kitchener. The link to registration is: <https://sites.google.com/view/fne-kwc/timberwolf-program>.



SOCIAL EVENTS AT ST. LOUIS PARISH COMING UP:



Saturday, January 3rd – 6 PM – Epiphany Potluck, Carols and Games – Bring your favourite dish to share and come and join as we celebrate together the Feast of the Epiphany.

We will have Children's Procession of Three Kings. We will sing a few carols and play fun group games for all ages! Organized by Kelly & Anna.

Saturday, January 31 – 4:30 – 10 PM - Annual Potluck, Ceili Dance & Children Games – Mark your calendars. The evening will start with Children Games and Crafts in the Nursery at 4:30 - 5:45 PM. Potluck dinner at 6 PM. Ceili Dancing from 7 to 10 PM with intermission around 8:45 PM. Once again, our fiddler will be Shane Cook, Canadian and US National Champion. Bev Bernbaum (our Caller from last year) will teach us all the dance steps. If you can follow instruction, you can dance. This is an event for all ages! The decorating theme will be "Fairy Tales". Wear a costume, if you wish! Watch for posters with more info in January.

Date	Sunday	Christmas	Loose	Diocesan	PAD
Dec. 14	4012.80	200.00	259.00	0.00	2310.15

Thank you for your generous donations!

Donations on-line: Via Canada Helps canadahelps.org/en/ (search for "St. Louis Waterloo")

Via diocesan website: hamiltondiocese.com/ways-to-give select "Online to a Parish" and then "St. Louis Waterloo".

Do not be afraid. Listen; I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people.



A Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ, the Lord." Let us praise and glorify the Lord! May the wonders of His birth fill you with Joy, Thankfulness and Praise!

Christmas blessings now and in the New Year! From Fr. Phil,

Kelly, Anna and Doug.

(Adoration of the Shepherds by Domenico Ghirlandaio (1485))



Resurrectionist Vocation Minute - The name given to the Child is Emmanuel — "God is with us." Not was with us, not will be one day, but is with us: in the world's story, in the Church's journey, and in the hidden (and not-so-hidden) places of our own lives. Mary received this presence with her wholehearted "yes," allowing God's Word to take flesh in her for the salvation of the world. Every vocation begins with the same openness: welcoming God's will, letting His presence shape us, and allowing that presence to take flesh within us, so that we may share Him with others. May we, like Mary, receive Emmanuel and give Him flesh through our lives. Fr. Michal Kruszewski, CR; resurrectionistvocation@gmail.com



The Christmas Mass on TV/computer - For those who cannot make it to church, please join the Catholic Community this Christmas. Watch the Daily TV Mass:

Christmas Eve: from 4:30 PM on dailytvmass.com
11:30 PM Salt + Light from Hamilton Cath.
Christmas Day: 8 AM & NOON on VisionTV
11 AM on Salt + Light

You can also watch on the web at www.dailytvmass.com

Mass Times for Christmas Season:

Feast	Date	Mass Times
Christmas Eve	Wed. Dec. 24	5 PM & 8 PM
Christmas Day	Thu. Dec. 25	9:30 AM & 11:30 AM
Boxing Day	Fri. Dec. 26	No Mass
Eve of Holy Family	Sat. Dec. 27	5 PM
Holy Family	Sun. Dec. 28	9:30 AM & 11:30 AM
5 th Day of Christmas	Mon. Dec. 29	No Mass
6 th Day of Christmas	Tue. Dec. 30	9 AM
New Year's Eve	Wed. Dec. 31	5 PM
New Year's Day	Thu. Jan. 1	9:30 AM ONLY
Sts. Basil & Gregory	Fri. Jan. 2	9 AM
Eve of Epiphany	Sat. Jan. 3	5 PM
Epiphany	Sun. Jan. 4	9:30 AM & 11:30 AM

Parish office hours this week:

Mon. & Tue.	Dec. 22 & 23	9 AM – NOON & 1 PM – 4 PM
Wednesday	Dec 24	9 AM – NOON &
Thu. & Friday	Dec. 25 & 26	closed

This bulletin was sent to the printers on Dec. 15th.

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