

# St. Joseph's Parish

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**PASTOR:** Fr. Robert Héту, P.P.

**DEACON:** Rev. Mr. Trevor Klein

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. Lori Cipparrone

**CUSTODIAN:** Mr. Kevin Shea

**SACRISTANS:** Brigitte Quinke & Catherine Cyr.



Oh Come  
Let us Adore Him

## From the Pastor's Desk

Fr. Robert Héту



The unfolding of God's loving plan of salvation though history has contained many surprises. Today's readings, on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, focus on the circumstances leading up to the first coming of Jesus, the event which sets the pattern for his coming to us now and at the end of time. The Gospel stresses the key role of Mary in the work of our salvation.

The first reading lovingly surprises us by telling of God's promise to David that he would have a long line of royal descendants culminating in a final King, Jesus Christ. The psalmist, in today's responsorial psalm, recalls all of God's promises and surprises us, describing God's promise to David and his descendants in terms of a loving covenant. The second reading surprises us as well with St. Paul's explanation of the unveiling of God's loving plan for human salvation through Jesus.

Today's Gospel lovingly surprises us by telling us that this final King would be born to an ordinary virgin, not by means of sexual relationship, but through the Holy Spirit, and that this Son of God, Jesus, would become a descendant of David. This would occur through Joseph, Mary's betrothed and the legal father of her son, as Joseph was "of the house of David." The Gospel narrative also surprises us by reminding us that God's loving promise is best fulfilled not in buildings, or even in great kings like Solomon, but rather in humble souls like Mary who trusted in God's promise.

We need to say a courageous and generous 'yes' to God. True obedience comes from a free choice made in the light of what is true and good. It often requires a great deal of courage because it can involve going against a tidal wave of social expectations. True obedience also aims at putting oneself at the service of something/Someone that is greater than oneself by accepting what God clearly wants us to do or what God wants to do through us. It is by saying, with Jesus and Mary, a wholehearted and totally unconditional 'Yes' so that Jesus will be re-born in us. By our saying 'Yes,' Jesus will be born or re-born in others too. Lord, enkindle in us love.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** "The secret of Christian living is love. Only love fills the empty spaces caused by evil." ~ Pope Francis

**LAUGHTER GOOD FOR THE SOUL:** Sign on a church marquee: "Merry Christmas to our Christian friends, Happy Hanukkah to our Jewish friends and Good Luck to our atheist friends."



Welcome to St. Joseph's Parish  
We extend a warm welcome to all.  
We pray that you feel at home.  
Please introduce yourself and  
Consider becoming a member  
of our Family of Faith.

### **MASS INTENTIONS**

#### **Monday, December 25, 2023**

Midnight Christmas Day Mass (12:00am)

10:00am Christmas Day Mass

#### **Tuesday December 26 – Friday December 29, 2023**

**No Weekday Masses**

#### **Saturday, December 30, 2023**

5:00pm **Parents of Terri Wellstead**

**Jacob Cornelisse** – Terri Wellstead

**Mike Dignard** – Ruth Dobrensky

**Intentions of Don & Barbara Cassidy** – Patrick and Carolynne O'Neil

#### **Sunday, December 31, 2023 - The Holy Family**

9:00am **Jacob Cornelisse** – Jane Thatcher

11:00am **Intentions of the Parish**

5:00pm **Mary Mother of God**

#### **Monday, January 1, 2024**

10:00am **New Year's Day Mass**

### **Parish Offerings**

**Your contributions for the weekends of December 17, 24, 31 will appear in a bulletin in early January.**

#### **Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 24, 2023**

From the angel Gabriel, Mary heard God's plan for her life and she said "Yes! and so the Saviour came into the world. Pray to know God's Will for your life, so as to help bring Jesus to our world. If you think God is calling you to do this as a priest, religious or deacon, call **Fr. Mark Morley, Director of Vocations, at 905-528-7988.** email [vocations@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:vocations@hamiltondiocese.com)



### **Christmas Midnight Mass at The Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King**

The traditional Christmas Midnight Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King will be celebrated by His Excellency, Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI and will be livestreamed on their [YouTube channel](#).





### Join the Choir for Christmas Carols

If you are planning to attend Midnight Mass this Christmas, the Choir would like to extend an invitation to join them for Christmas carols beginning at 11:30pm. Help us ring in the birth of Baby Jesus!

### Reel Justice Film Festival,

We are thrilled to announce that our lineup for the 2024 year is ready to share! We have five engaging documentaries to open our minds and hearts to the challenges and opportunities around us. Our films this year focus on land and placemaking, tackling themes of food sovereignty, land rights, endangered species, and organic agriculture.

We kick off the season on **January 25, 2024** with the film **Gather**, an intimate portrait of the movement among Indigenous communities to reclaim their spiritual, political, and cultural identities through food sovereignty. **The dynamic duo of Kitty Lickers and Dr. Adrienne Xavier from McMaster University's Indigenous Studies Department will be guest speakers for the evening.** Educators in Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Food Sovereignty, they also managed the *Our Sustenance* program, a sustainability and food sovereignty program in their community of Six Nations for several years. Please view our full film lineup online at **Reel Justice Film Festival** to learn more about our films and register for events. We hope you can join us! The Reel Justice Film Festival Committee: Gayle, Yola, Emily, Daniela, Rita, and Dominy

### 2024 Confirmation Parent & Candidate Meeting

Grade seven students and their parents are asked to attend an important meeting on January 18, 2024 in St. Joseph Church at 7pm. Please mark this date in your calendars as it you will be getting.



### Bible Sunday 2024

The inspiration for Bible Sunday comes from Pope Francis' letter for the conclusion of the Year of Mercy in which he states "It would be beneficial if every Christian community on one Sunday of the liturgical year, could renew its efforts to make the Sacred Scriptures better known and more widely diffused. It would be a Sunday given over entirely to the word of God, so as to appreciate the inexhaustible riches contained in that constant dialogue between the Lord and his people." Bishop Crosby and the Diocese of Hamilton has chosen the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time each year as our day to emphasize how the bible speaks and how we listen. This year, Bible Sunday will be on Jan. 20 & 21, 2024.

### Want to Order A Bible?

The Diocese of Hamilton is currently taking orders for a ***NRSV Green Soft Cover Bible*** for \$17.50 **or *The Catholic Family Connections Bible*** for \$22.00. If you are interested in ordering one of these bibles, please pick up an order form in the Narthex and return to the Church Office along with your payment.

### Calling All Moms!

Are you looking for a Free, Fun, Faith Filled Afternoon For You and Your Little Ones this Winter?

#### **Meet Up Every First Wednesday of the Month**

4:30pm - 6:00pm

We have a retired Teacher, who will host a Saint Lesson and Craft;

While you Gather with Like-Minded Moms, to share a Hot Chocolate and Ideas on how to live out your Catholic Faith. This is a great opportunity to

connect with other incredible Catholic Moms; It Takes a Village.

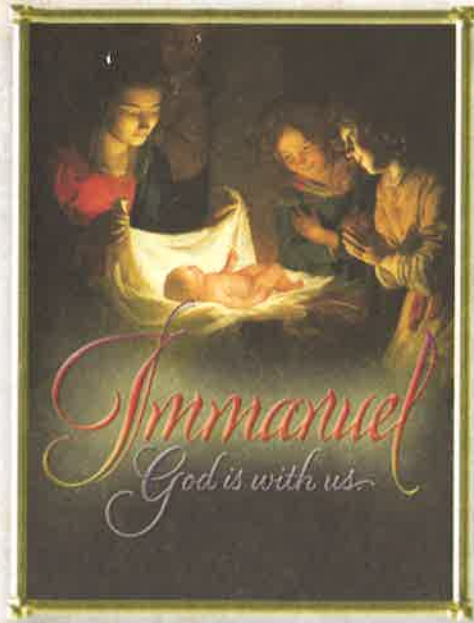
To RSVP or Volunteer, Please Email:

[st.johnbaptistmg@catholicmomsgroup.com](mailto:st.johnbaptistmg@catholicmomsgroup.com)

St. John the Baptist, 45 Victoria Rd. N, Guelph

### Upcoming Parish Events

December 24	Sunday Masses as usual, + <b>Christmas Eve Mass</b> at 5pm and 8pm
December 25	<b>Christmas Day Masses at 12:00am and 10:00 am</b>
December 26-29	No Weekday Masses
December 31	Regular Sunday Masses + <b>New Year's Eve Mass</b> at 5pm
January 1, 2024	<b>New Year's Day Mass – 10am</b>
January 2	No weekday Mass
January 7	Knights of Columbus Charity Breakfast
January 18	Confirmation Parent & Candidate Meeting, St. Joseph 7pm
January 20 & 21	Bible Sunday



*You* are to name him Jesus,  
for he will save his people from their sins.  
—Matthew 1:21

## A Heavenly Miracle

On that first glorious Christmas day  
As the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth  
A heavenly miracle came down to earth  
The Son of God is born to show us the way

From a most humble, forlorn wooden stable  
Humankind is for ever full of divine grace  
As we experience the Redeemer's sacred face  
A saving gift for the world and all its people

Let us take time, this year, to open our heart  
To remember the loving message of Jesus' birth  
Promoting reconciliation and peace on earth  
United and full of grace, let us do our just part

As the Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth  
Yes, a heavenly miracle came down to earth

Fr. Robert Héту  
October 25, 2023  
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C H R I S T M A S



## Heart to Heart

December 15, 2023 (#525)

### CHRISTMAS 2023

Dear Friends,

We will soon celebrate the great *Solemnity of The Nativity of the Lord – Christmas*. Already Christmas cards are in the mail, Christmas music fills the airwaves, and Christmas décor can be seen on, and in, our homes. Christmas gifts are being exchanged. Choirs are practicing Christmas music and parishioners are beginning to decorate the churches in preparation for the Christmas liturgies. Advertisements throughout the diocese encourage Catholics to *“Come Home For Christmas”!* We want to welcome sisters and brothers who worship with us at Christmas, so all will experience the profound blessing of being a follower of Jesus Christ – the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, as Handel’s Messiah so beautifully proclaims!



And when we give each other Christmas gifts in His name, let us remember that He has given us the sun and the moon and the stars, and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans - and all that lives and move upon them. He has given us all green things and everything that blossoms and bears fruit and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused - and to save us from our foolishness, from all our sins, He came down to earth and gave us Himself.

- Sigrud Undset



At this darkest time of the year, *“Jesus is born in our midst; He is God with us. He comes to accompany our daily lives, to share with us in all things: our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears. He comes as a helpless child. He is born in the cold night, poor among the poor. In need of everything, he knocks at the door of our hearts to find warmth and shelter.”* (Pope Francis, Christmas Message 2022)

During these Christmas festivities, take time to recall your blessings and give thanks in quiet prayer. When caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations, be attentive to recognize the abundant presence of grace and goodness that surrounds you. The Lord reveals himself still in boundless acts of kindness and generosity. When you are aware of his presence through others, allow him to move you deeply, and to be generous in turn. His mercy works in and through us. As we are blessed by the goodness of others, so others are blessed by our generous acts!

The 1928 Nobel Prize winning Norwegian author, Sigrud Undset, wrote this beautiful reflection on Christmas. I offer it as a gentle gift of wisdom.

Our Lady of the Annunciation, pray for us!

Ex corde, + Douglas, OMI



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