
Advent is not Christmas!

The focus of Advent is preparation for the coming of the Lord -- both in commemoration of His Nativity and His coming again at the end of time. Though many people see this time of year as a part of the "Christmas Season," it isn't; the official liturgical Christmas season does not begin until the first Mass at Christmas Eve, and doesn't end liturgically until the Octave of the Epiphany in January.

The mood of the Advent season is one of spiritual preparation that increases in joy with each day, and the "Christmas" commercialism that surrounds it in the Western world should be overcome as much as possible. The singing of Christmas carols (which comes earlier and earlier each year), the talk of "Christmas" as a present reality, the decorated trees and the parties -- these things are "out of season" for Catholics; we should strive to keep the Season of Advent holy and penitential, always remembering, as they say, that "Jesus is the reason for the Season."

To sum up the similarities and differences between Advent and Lent as penitential seasons, there's this, by Fr. Lawrence Smith:

"Advent is the time to make ready for Christ to live with us. Lent is the time to make us ready to die with Christ. Advent makes Lent possible. Lent makes salvation possible. Advent is the time when eternity approaches earth. Lent is the time when time reaches consummation in Christ's eternal Sacrifice to the Father. Advent leads to Christ's life in time on earth. Lent leads to Christ's eternal Life in Heaven. The Cross -- through the Mass, penance, and mortification -- is the bridge connecting Advent and Lent, Christ and His Church, man and God."

So, restore Advent and don't think "Christmas is here" until it truly comes. One way to help focus on the theme of preparation is to read the parables in the 24th and 25th chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. Another way to help you do this is to think of the Saint who embodies the spirit of this Season more than any other: the great St. John the Baptist. If you have an icon of him, venerate it especially now. Make special prayers to him and consider the message of this "voice of one crying in the desert": *"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."*

The Sisters of the Carmel of Saint Joseph will pray for you during the **Novena to Infant Jesus**, December 16th to December 25th, 2018. Are you troubled? Do you need spiritual support? You can participate in the Novena to Infant Jesus. Mail your prayer intention information with your name and address to:

Carmel of Saint Joseph 1127 Carmel-Koch Road, R.R. #1 St. Agatha, ON N0B 2L0



NO Mass on Mondays

Tuesday, December 11

8:00 am + ROSIMBO ZATTA - Ruth
+ GENEVIEVE BYRNE - Lorraine Ezekiel

Wednesday, December 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament begins at 6:00 pm and concludes with Benediction at 7:00 pm

7:15 pm + MARY DREHER - Les & Gert Gueth
+ ELIZABETH THIES - St. Ambrose Ladies' group
Sacrament of Reconciliation 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Thursday, December 13 - St. Lucy

8:00 am + MIKE O'TOOLE - Roger Nugent
+ EUGENIO & PALMIRA PEREIRA & DECEASED FAMILY

Friday, December 14

8:00 am + HELEN & EDMOND MARION - Bonnie
+ ANITA FIGUEIREDO - parents and family

Saturday, December 15

8:00 am + PATRICIA WHELAN - Diana & David Cahill
Sacrament of Reconciliation 9am - 10am

5:00 pm + JIM DELAHUNTY - Pat and family
+ DORIS DOBBIN - Gerald
+ JOANNE McCABE - Teresa and Nick Cherri

Sunday, December 16 - Third Sunday of Advent

9:00 am + ANN & FRANK DeSOUZA - Marie and Theresa
11:00 am - for the intentions of all parishioners



Help needed for the Christmas Hamper Delivery Saturday, Dec 22

Our **St. Vincent de Paul society** is kindly asking for volunteers to help deliver Christmas food hampers on **Saturday December 22, beginning at 8:45 am in the Church Hall.** There will be over 90 hampers prepared, which will need to be delivered to local families. Many helpers will make for less work!!

Please, if you have a couple of hours to spare, contact the parish office 519-621-2013 or stambrose@golden.net

Pick up your 2019 Church envelopes at the back of the Church this weekend!

One Heart, One Soul Campaign

The Diocese of Hamilton is conducting the One Heart, One Soul Campaign to raise money for every Parish in the Diocese and for shared ministries. Answers to a set of Frequently Asked Questions appear in Parish bulletins regularly. A compilation of all questions that have been published are available throughout the campaign at oneheartonesoul.ca.

What kinds of things does the Diocese do for Parishes and others already?

The good work of the Diocese of Hamilton is widespread. Here are a few examples of the ways diocesan offices enhance the life of our Parishes and people:

- Advocating for the dignity of all life and supporting and promoting marriage and family life.
- Encouraging vocational discernment to priesthood and religious life.
- Programming and support for youth and young adult ministry.
- Adult faith formation, catechesis, religious education and sacramental preparation.
- Assistance in the relocation and resettlement of refugees.
- Advocacy on behalf of the poor and marginalized.
- Assistance for Parishes in all aspects of sacred worship, including formation for liturgical ministers.
- Support for Parishes in the areas of human resources, building maintenance, financial reporting, stewardship, charitable giving and Parish development.

Does the Diocese help organizations outside of it?

Yes, the Diocese is generous to many in need. For example, the Diocese has an ongoing financial commitment to help the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, which is still suffering from the effects of the devastating earthquake there in 2010, and the Diocese of Churchill-Hudson Bay, which includes northern Manitoba and the territory of Nunavut. The Diocese also supports many worthy causes within and outside of the Diocese, such as: organizations who support the poor and marginalized, like St. Vincent de Paul, the Good Shepherd and several others; health care initiatives, including hospice care and conscience protection for those in the medical field; community organizations such as the Catholic Youth Organization, Catholic Family Services and Catholic Children's Aid; and several other organizations and causes in need who do the work of the gospel. Additionally, the Diocese is proud to have made a significant gift to St. Peter's Seminary in London, helping to ensure the seminary can continue its mission to form priests for our Diocese

Why a significant gift to a seminary in another Diocese?

There is a longstanding and fruitful connection between St. Peter's Seminary in London and the Diocese of Hamilton. For more than a hundred years, St. Peter's has trained a majority of our diocesan Priests – and those of so many Canadian dioceses. Of the current Hamilton seminarians, the majority are at St. Peter's, which is one of only three English-speaking seminaries in Canada. Hamilton Priests have also served on the seminary's staff. The seminary is in need – these funds were required for St. Peter's to continue its mission of forming Priests, deacons and lay ministers.



A Family Rosary will take place on Friday, Dec. 14th at 6:30pm at St. Ambrose Church.

All families and children of ALL ages are welcome, no child is too young nor too old to attend. After the Rosary we will have fellowship in the church basement. Please bring a snack to share. Refreshments will be provided. Please use side door off the parking lot. *"To pray the Rosary for children, and even more, with children, training them from their earliest years to experience this daily "pause for prayer" with the family, is admittedly not the solution to every problem, but it is a spiritual aid which should not be underestimated" Saint Pope John Paul II*



Children's Mass Next Sunday, December 16 at 11:00 am Mass

Families with young children are especially welcome to attend this Mass. Children will be invited to sit in the Sanctuary for the homily. Please read below.....

What Is "Bambinelli Sunday?"

Each year on the Third Sunday of Advent, children gather with their families in St. Peter's Square for "Bambinelli Sunday." The children bring with them figurines of the Christ Child -- the "Bambinelli" -- from their family's Nativity scene.

Here at St. Ambrose Parish, we invite children to bring their baby Jesus to our Children's Mass on December 16th and Father Irek will bless their "bambinelli" baby Jesus figurine.

Healthy Humour Happy Hearts will be held on Wednesday, December 19 from 10:30 am - 11:30am

Blood Pressure Checks will be held at the back of the Church on Sunday December 16 after the 9am and 11am Masses.



St. Vincent de Paul Society Christmas "Giving Tree"

Again this year the "Giving Tree" is located in the Sanctuary. Donations to assist the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society can be placed in the box beside the tree. Envelopes are provided. Donations will go toward providing Christmas hampers and store vouchers for families and individuals in need.

Christmas Offertory Sign-up

Parishioners are invited to sign-up to take up the offertory gifts at the Christmas and New Year's Masses. Sign-up sheets are at the back of the Church.