

# ST. PAUL'S BASILICA

EST. 1822 ~ FIRST CATHOLIC PARISH IN TORONTO

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## STAFF

**Fr. Robert O'Brian:** Pastor

**Rev. Antanios Farah, OAM:** In Residence. Hospital Chaplain

**Cathy LaBlanc:** Sacristan **Lynett Wilson:** Office Manager **Micah MacMullen:** Youth Minister

**Jason Lo:** Bookkeeper **Ives Alvarez:** Custodian

**Joseph Angelo:** Music Director **Allison Angelo:** Cantor **Andrea Cerswell:** 11 am Choir Lead



*Feast of the Holy Family*

## ❖ A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

### The Twelve Days of Christmas

Surprisingly, as Christians we are out of step with the societal observance of the season. By now all mention of Christmas will have been stopped on radio, TV and other media. And this year we were treated to a compressed Advent of only a shade over three weeks because Christmas fell on a Monday. Yet, it is now that we are in the midst of the Christmas season.

A number of feasts occur to underline the point. This weekend we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family and the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. On December 28th we observed the memorial of the Holy Innocents, the children martyred by Herod. On a side note, the Art Gallery of Ontario has a very well-known portrayal of this event by the artist, Peter Paul Reubens.

The Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God is the grand celebration of God taking on our human condition, coming to us in flesh.

She is the Mother of the Saviour and therefore our mother in our new life in Christ. By now, some of the comings and goings of Christmas are in the past and hopefully you have time to rest a little. Christ's birth cemented our belonging to God, as St. Paul proclaims in his letter to the Romans, "nothing can separate us from the love of Christ". In Mary we have a loving and attentive mother who understands the tiniest details of our needs. Take a little time to breathe this truth in!

On the Feast of the Holy Family our meditation extends to St. Joseph and how the three formed a family of new birth for us. Not knowing much about Joseph's life leaves us free to accept that he is close to us. As patron saint of the Church everywhere in the world, it is Joseph who completes a kind of earthly trinity that is taken up in the Holy Trinity because the Son has become one of us.

Next weekend we will celebrate the revelation of Christ in the Solemnity of the Epiphany, literally, "the showing". As the wise men came with gifts for the Christ child, it has been a tradition in many countries to exchange gifts on this feast. Giving someone a gift in this spirit asserts that they are another Christ. Again, we can think of St. Paul who repeats over and over that we are new and living in Christ. Insofar as we desire to do God's will, we reflect that indwelling of the Saviour. Even if we don't always reflect it, Jesus never abandons us. He is always keeping us with Him. All we can do is just try to have the biggest heart we can to say, "Yes".

May you drink in the full joy of our salvation this Christmas season.

In Christ,

*Fr. Bob*



# ❖ NEWS

## Weekly Mass Intentions

*Saturday, December 30*

4:30 pm ♦ † Mary Catharine Staples

*Sunday, December 31*

8:30 am ♦

11:00 am ♦ For the People

4:30 pm ♦

*Monday, January 1*

10:00 am ♦ For the People

*Tuesday, January 2*

5:00 pm ♦

*Wednesday, January 3*

5:00 pm ♦ † Ralph Berney

*Thursday, January 4*

5:00 pm ♦

*Friday, January 5*

5:00 pm ♦ Private Intention

## Holiday Mass Schedule

### 2024 New Year Blessings!

*May God be with you and your families through this New Year and fill your lives with comfort, love and cheer. May this day and the days ahead, hold many blessings for you and yours.*

*Happy New Year!*

*Fr. Bob and  
The Parish Staff*

### New Year Masses

**New Year's Eve - Dec 31**

**8:30 am & 11:00 am**

(Regular Sunday Mass)

**4:30 pm**

**New Year's Day - Jan 1**

**10:00 am**



## Parish Collection Summary

Due to the bulletin publication schedule over the Christmas and New Year's season, our parish collection summary from December 16 to January 7 will be provided in the January 14, 2024 bulletin.

*Thank you for supporting our parish!*

## Donate Online



Don't carry cash or even own cheques? Want to collect miles or points on your credit card? A single or monthly donation through your credit card is a great option. Tax receipts are issued immediately for a single donation and at the end of the year for a recurring gift. Select the Donate button at [stpaulsbasilica.archtoronto.org](http://stpaulsbasilica.archtoronto.org) or scan the QR code. Please ensure that "St. Paul's Basilica, Toronto" is selected from the Parish drop down menu when signing up.



## Holiday Office Closure



The parish office will be closed between Friday, December 22, 2023 and Friday, January 5, 2024 for the holidays. Emails and voicemails will be returned once the office reopens on Monday, January 8, 2024. Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

## 2024 Offertory Envelopes

Offertory Envelopes for 2024 are now available in the front entrance vestibule. The boxed sets are organized alphabetically by last name. **Please make sure to pick up only the box with your name on it and DO NOT use the 2024 envelopes until the new year begins.**



## Little Saints: A Catholic Children's Program

*Sundays from 12 pm - 2 pm*

### Little Saints A Catholic Children's Program



Our Little Saints program returns on January 14th and is open to all elementary school aged children. Each Sunday will focus on a different Saint or a Saint based theme with fun games and arts & craft projects to enhance the learning experience. This is a great way to meet other children, form friendships and learn a bit more about our Catholic Faith. Parents are welcome to stay with their children or enjoy some coffee and fellowship of their own. Meet in the parish basement after the 11 am Mass. Light snacks are provided. All are welcome!

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