

ST. PAUL'S BASILICA

EST. 1822 ~ FIRST CATHOLIC PARISH IN TORONTO

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STAFF

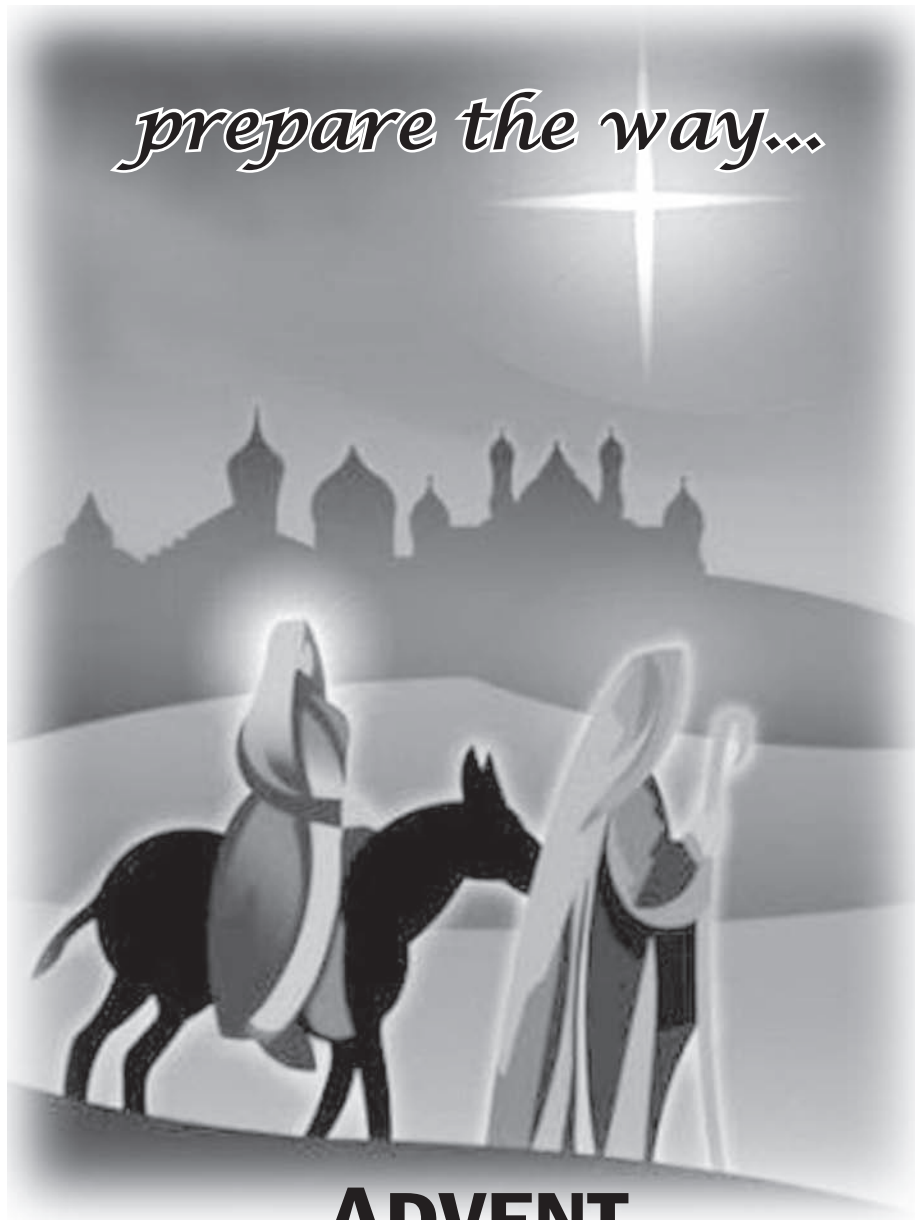
Fr. Robert O'Brien: Pastor

Fr. Keith Wallace: In Residence

Cathy LeBlanc: Sacristan Lynett Wilson: Office Manager Micah MacMullen Youth Minister

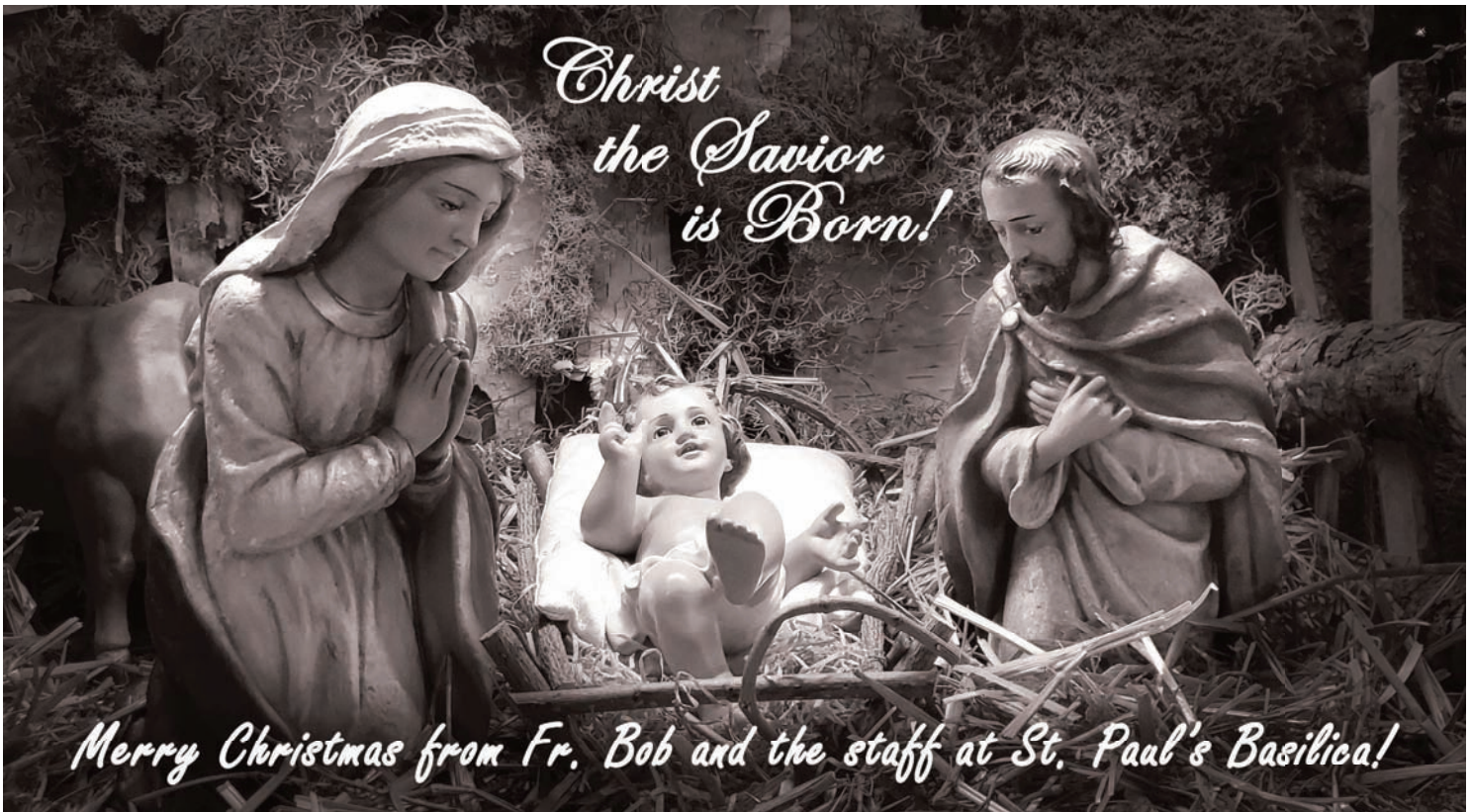
Jason Lo: Bookkeeper Ives Alvarez: Custodian

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



ADVENT

❖ A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR



Innocence and New Life

I have the privilege of interviewing brand new parents and get to see first-hand the awesome power of this event, as they revel in the gift of their child. Life is changed and despite the unknowns there is a wonderful innocence about it all. Parents lap it up! When we learn that God chooses to live among us in this way as well, it is easy to see how we are drawn to the manger and the infant Jesus.

As we become adults, however, we get schooled in blunting that innocence. We might learn that our own “innocent” thoughts are not enough to meet the challenges of life and relationships. We even become disappointed in ourselves and start finding life too complicated to handle with open eyes. Once we have had to walk up steep hills it can feel like level ground is hard to come by.

I grew up kids wanting to be, “cool”. It could have many meanings. Various rebellious movements appeared as well, expressing dissatisfaction with society or the circumstances of life. Cool became “edgy”. That push to separate oneself

from the crowd or to make a statement has morphed in many ways over the years.

Christmas might be a good time to revisit innocence and see its place in our world. There is a risk that Christmas could allow us the sentiment of the innocence of life without benefiting us much in our daily lives. Can we revel in innocence while also allowing that life is complicated, difficult and messy? When we read the Gospels, we see Jesus waded wasn't afraid to. What does that look like for us and how do we cultivate it fruitfully?

First, innocence allows us to see the newness of things, most easily good things but also even things tinged with problems. It is better to know than to not know. Even if we can't materially do much about something we can now bring it into our relationship with God.

Second, it helps us appreciate the ways in which we humans do work together and accomplish a great deal, despite the presence of not inconsiderable problems. I wonder at the amount of co-operation and co-ordination involved in any of the

big construction projects going on in the city. The number of skills and the amount of work involved is impressive. Noticing the impressive things we do together can help us not to lose the forest for the trees.

Third, innocence challenges us to be “articulate”, that is, to develop a narrative that is both true and one we can live by with God and with others. After we are finished being “edgy” what are we going to do? We need that positive vision and the faith and patience to take the steps one-at-a-time to move articulately.

At Christmas we are celebrating the most wonderful reality. God loves us as a human family and loves each one of us. He was not afraid to come in innocence and love us faithfully in the midst of a selfish world. Come let us adore Him! May our hearts be on fire with His love!

Help us, O Lord, to experience wonder and innocence this Christmas and may it never leave us!

In Christ,

Fr. Bob

❖ NEWS

Weekly Mass Intentions

Sanctuary Lamp

Marietta Menguito

Saturday, December 21

4:30 pm ♦ † Fionan Bracken

Sunday, December 22

8:30 am ♦ For the People

11:00 am ♦ † Edward & RoseMary
Rodrigues, and Robert, Teresa &
Peter DeSouza

Tuesday, December 24

4:30 pm ♦ † Emperatriz Quiroga Ruiz &
Ciro Antonio Velasco Quiroga

7:00 pm ♦

11:00 pm ♦

Wednesday, December 25

8:30 am ♦

11:00 am ♦ † Aileen Menez

Thursday, December 26

5:00 pm ♦

Friday, December 27

5:00 pm ♦ Private Intention

Holiday Mass Schedule

*Wishing you and your families
a season that's merry and bright
with the light of God's love.*

*May God bless us all with
His loving presence throughout
the coming New Year!*

*Merry Christmas!
Fr. Bob and
The Parish Staff*



Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve - Dec 24

4:30 pm Family Mass
(Preceded by Carols)

7:00 pm & 11:00 pm

Christmas Day - Dec 25

8:30 am & 11:00 am

New Year Masses

New Year's Eve - Dec 31

4:30 pm

New Year's Day - Jan 1

11:00 am

Parish Collection Summary

	2024	2023	Diff
Dec 1	\$ 6,101	\$ 5,030	↑ \$ 1,071
Dec 8	\$ 6,993	\$ 10,450	↓ \$ 3,457
Dec 15	*\$ 7,008	*\$ 8,530	↓ \$ 1,522

Due to the bulletin publication schedule over the holidays, parish collection summary from Dec 22 to Jan 5 will be provided in the January 12, 2025 bulletin.

Mth Target | \$ 20,103 | \$ 48,020 | ↓ \$ 27,917

** Includes Monthly Pre-Authorized Debit Donations*

Thank you for supporting our parish!

Cashless Donations

With fewer people using cheques or cash, here are some new ways to donate!

Online at stpaulsbasilica.archtoronto.org or scan the QR code or and hit the Donate button. Check that "St. Paul's Basilica, Toronto" is selected from the Parish drop down menu when signing up.

Tip Tap - Simply tap your card on the 'tiptap' device, located at the back of the church, to donate. If you would like to receive a tax receipt at the end of the year, you can register your physical card by scanning the QR Code next to the 'tiptap' device. An information sheet is available next to the 'tiptap' device.



Holiday Office Closure

The parish office is closed for the holidays. Emails and voicemails will be returned once the office reopens on Monday, January 6, 2025. Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Registration for Sacramental Preparation Now Open

Families with children ready to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation next spring can pick up a registration package from the back of the church or parish office. Information sessions for Confirmation will be held January 9th at 7 pm and January 11th at 10 am. Please note children preparing for Confirmation should attend the meeting along with their parents. Parent meetings for First Holy Communion have already taken place, however we continue to accept registrations. Contact Micah MacMullen at mmacmullen@archtoronto.org for more info.

Winter Clothing, Toiletries and Food Drive

Until December 29th, the parish will collect **CLEAN GENTLY USED** winter clothing, **NEW UNOPENED** toiletries, as well as **NEW UNWORN** socks. These donations will benefit our neighbours the Good Shepherd Ministries and the Mustard Seed. Please separate clothing from toiletries.

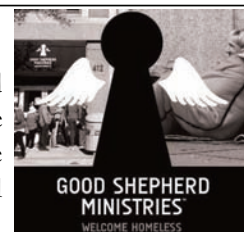


2025 Offertory Envelopes

Offertory Envelopes for 2025 are available in the front entrance vestibule, organized alphabetically by last name. **Please double check that the box you pick up has your name and DO NOT begin using the 2025 envelopes until January.**

Help for the Homeless

Help Good Shepherd Ministries offer food, shelter, and care to the poor and homeless. Your gift makes a difference this Christmas and throughout the year. To donate, please call 416-869-3619 ext. 277, visit goodshepherd.ca, or email donations@goodshepherd.ca. Thank you!



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