

# 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

Delmalisa Chilombo: Sacristan Ben Richards: 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

### Creation Being Transformed

It is not surprising for those of us in the northern hemisphere that we become a little contemplative at this time of year, when the nights are longest and the days are shortest. What does the darkness carry with it? For centuries, it meant that food could not be grown and work could not continue. We experience a little of that ourselves if we are among those affected by the changing seasons and find that we have less energy.

The Gospels of Luke and Matthew describe the surprising circumstances of Jesus' birth. In Matthew, we have the description of the star that appears and guides the Magi to the Holy Family. In Toronto, filled with light throughout the night, we are lucky if we see any stars at all. To our ancestors, those pinpoint lights that appeared at night were a basic part of their knowledge. The very idea we have of heaven is rooted in the vastness of a universe that could not be reached out to and touched. From this wide universe, light rests on such a humble place!

In Luke's Gospel, we have the account of the shepherds in their fields at night, hearing the chorus of God's messengers—the angels—and being drawn to the crib. In the midst of the chill of the night, warmth comes from the baby and his parents, and from the shepherds and their animals. A warm and



probably pungent place—and certainly a very humble one!

God did come to dwell among us, but the coming was anything but frenetic. There is a beautiful stillness here. I hope that as you celebrate Christmas this year, God comes to you in that stillness, even in the midst of the noise and activity that characterize our time together.

Traditionally, this is a time of year when we let go of our skepticism and look for the goodness that we may remember from an earlier time in our lives...or perhaps are still searching for. The “renewed” innocence that Christ brings, however, is not simply greater or better than the innocence we remember. It is the fruit of creation being made new according to the promise of God the Father.

We have been made new. At every Mass, especially, we are being brought to full stature in this new life. And like Christ's appearance, it sneaks up on us—it is a surprise that emerges from a humble place.

Just as we believe that God came to live among us and that Christ was fulfilling the Father's plan, so we believe that Christ has brought this new creation—the Kingdom—near to us, and that we have received His very self as our gift. That is why we call Jesus Emmanuel, God-with-us.

May God be fully with all of you!

In Christ,

*Fr. Bob*

## ❖ NOTEWORTHY

### 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 & The Parish Staff*

#### *Christmas Masses*

**Christmas Eve - Dec 24**

**4:30 pm Family Mass**  
(Preceded by Carols)

**6:30 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**



**December 21, 2025**

*Please join us in celebrating our*

**JUBILEE YEAR**  
**Closing Mass**

**DECEMBER 28TH, 2025**  
**11 AM MASS**





# ❖ NEWS

## Weekly Mass Intentions

*Saturday, December 20*

4:30 pm ♦ † Rose Yeung

*Sunday, December 21*

8:30 am ♦ Birthday Blessings & Thanksgiving for the life of Marietta Menguito

11:00 am ♦ For the People

*Tuesday, December 23*

5:00 pm ♦ † Rory O'Malley / Comer

*Wednesday, December 24*

4:30 pm ♦ Julie Slade & her children, Nicholas, Jacob, Liam, Andrew, Karoline, Jamie & † Anton  
6:30 pm ♦ For the People  
11:00 pm ♦ For the People

*Thursday, December 25*

8:30 am ♦ For the People  
11:00 am ♦ † Aileen Menez

*Friday, December 26*

5:00 pm ♦ Private Intention

## Parish Collection Summary

	2025	2024	Diff
<b>Dec 7</b>	\$ 6,388	\$ 6,993	↓\$ 239
<b>Dec 14</b>	\$ 5,492	\$ 7,008	↓\$ 1,516

Due to the bulletin publication schedule over the holidays, parish collection summary from Dec 21 to Jan 4 will be provided in the January 11, 2026 bulletin.

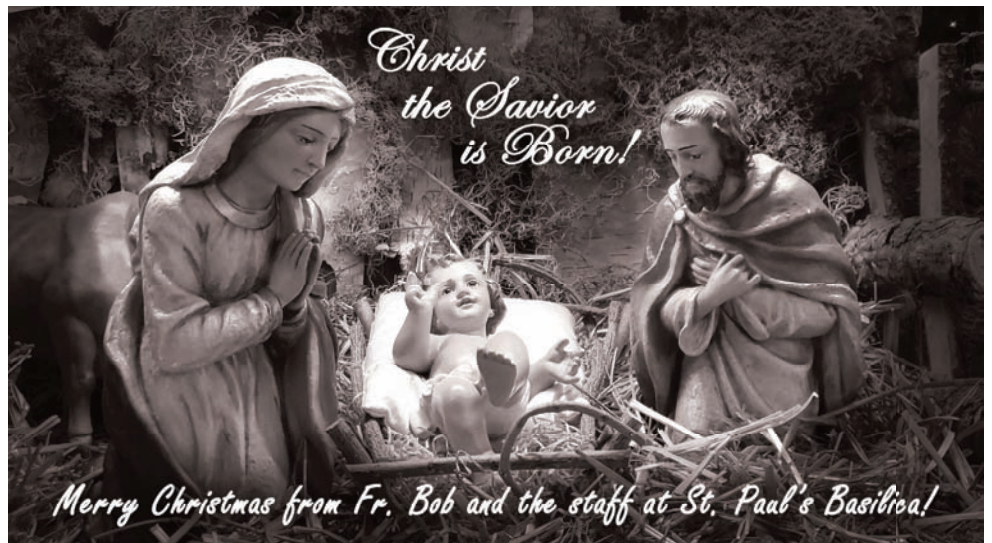
<b>Mth Target</b>	\$ 11,880	\$ 33,390	↓\$21,510
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*Thank you for supporting our parish!*

## 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 5, 2026. Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

## Letter of Thanks from the Archbishop of Toronto

As the Holy Year of Jubilee comes to a close, His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo has written to express his heartfelt gratitude to the St. Paul's Basilica community for its role as a pilgrimage church during this sacred year. He gives thanks for the parish's hospitality in welcoming pilgrims, offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the various Jubilee-related liturgies and events that fostered prayer, hope, and renewal. He notes that St. Paul's generous participation helped many encounter Christ's mercy and truly live the call to be Pilgrims of Hope. The full letter is available at the back of the church for anyone who would like to read it in its entirety.



## 2026 Offertory Envelopes



Offertory Envelopes for 2026 are now available in the front entrance vestibule, organized alphabetically by last name. **Please VERIFY that the box you pick up has your name on the label and DO NOT begin using the 2026 envelopes until January.**

## Winter Clothing, Toiletries and Food Drive

During December, the parish will collect **CLEAN GENTLY USED** winter clothing, such as, coats, boots, hats, gloves, warm tops and pants. We will also collect **NEW UNOPENED** toiletries, such as, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, bar soap and shampoo 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 when dropping off donations in the boxes near the altar.



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