

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH

589 HUGEL AVENUE, MIDLAND, ONTARIO L4R 1W3

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Pastor: Father Roselle Cyrille R. Azares

Deacons: Anthony Ruta P.D.

Timothy Dunlop P.D.

Parish Secretary: Juanita Wootton-Radko

Custodian: Jim Lamers



ADVENT



Mass Intentions for the week

Tuesday December 20

12:05 +Richard Arczewski
Requested by Mom & Dad

Wednesday December 21

9:30 Elementary School Mass
12:05 +Peter Lamers
Requested by Sandy and Edwina

Thursday December 22

12:05 +Steven Perrault
Requested by Val & Don Perrault

Friday December 23

11am – Holy Hour
12:05 noon +Eugenio & Caterina Moscon
Requested by John and family

Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Eve - Saturday December 24

No 10 am mass or confessions today
5 pm 8 pm 11 pm

Christmas Day - Sunday December 25

No confessions today
9 am 11:30 am



Please remember the following people in your prayers:
Mary McCarthy; Nicole Marchildon; Stephen Roach; Lilah
Bates; Shelley Smith; Nadine Adams; Peter Pattenaude;
Bob Kokron; Brenda Bylow; John Jerome



The Pope's Prayer Intention for December

For Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

Holy is Thy Name

The celebration of Christmas is just a week away, and the Church, on this fourth Sunday of Advent, gives us two names to guide us on this home stretch. The names are essential for us to capture the true reason for this season of Advent. The two names also contain within them the lessons for us how best to prepare and respond to the realities they indicate. The two names both refer, unsurprisingly, to Christ.

The first name was chosen by God the Father over 700 years before His Son took flesh in Mary's womb. The prophet Isaiah announced: "The Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin will be with child and bear a son and shall call him Emmanuel". Seven centuries later, in describing the miraculous events of Jesus' conception and birth, St. Matthew wrote, "All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel".

The apostle then tells us what the name means: "God is with us." "God-is-with-us." At the time the prophecy was made, the Jews thought that a child born of a young woman would be a symbol that God was "with them" in the sense of being "on their side." They would never have been able to fathom that God was intending to fulfill that prophetic title literally.

God, the Creator, was going to take on the nature of his creature. God himself was going to enter the human race, and be "descended from David according to the flesh". But there was a clear purpose for God's presence. That purpose is given to us in the second name we encounter in today's Gospel.

The angel tells Joseph that Mary will bear a son and he is to name him Jesus. This name, Jesus, means "God saves," and the angel tells Joseph quite clearly what this infant will save the Jews from: "he will save his people from their sins." God-is-with-us, therefore, for the purpose of saving us from our sins.

The Son of God did not become God-with-us merely to "hang around with us," in the sense of friends hanging around with their close circle of friends, but the Son of God came to hang for us on the cross. Not only does the name Jesus interpret the name Emmanuel, but the name Jesus also makes possible Emmanuel, because Jesus saved us from our sins so that we could be much more

fully with Him who came to be with us. Our sins prevent communion with God and hence Jesus, in coming to save us from them, was making possible the fulfillment of the prophetic name Emmanuel.

Emmanuel means "God **is** with us," not "God **was** with us." Jesus means that God **saves**, not God **saved**. Our sharing in the mystery of Christmas, therefore, depends on whether we enter in the present into this salvific presence. The two titles point to the greatest gift that we will receive this Christmas. But the question is whether we will receive the gift, open it up, and take advantage of it.

The name "Jesus" indicates that God came to save us from our sins, and Jesus founded a sacrament on Easter Sunday evening to do so. But we need to respond to that offer of merciful love.

So many Catholics receive that gift but leave it as an unopened package in the corners of their lives. That is one of the reasons why their celebration of Christmas is not nearly as joyful as God wants it to be. Our appreciation for Jesus' coming into the world is directly dependent on whether we realize we need him - that we are sinners in need of so loving a saviour.

Jesus is like the world's greatest surgeon walking into a cancer ward. The path to healing is for each patient to allow the doctor to operate and remove the cancer. Jesus, who created us without our will, will not save us against our will. We must recognize our need for salvation and come to receive it in the way that Jesus himself set it up.

In Mary, the Queen Church, the divine physician is seeing his patients every day in the operating room of the confessional box. Our Christmas joy will be directly proportional to our realization of Jesus as Saviour and our reception of Jesus as Saviour. Jesus, moreover, is "God-with-us", and there is no expiration date to his presence.

In fact, prior to his Ascension into heaven, he told us, "Know that I am with you always, until the end of time". Jesus of course is with us in many ways - through creation, through grace, through Sacred Scripture, through his image in others, through those he ordained to act in his very person, through his mystical body, the Church.

But there is one way above all others by which Christ

remains with us: in his Body and Blood. The Eucharist is Emmanuel, God-with-us. The same God who was in Mary's womb we receive in our bodies at Holy Communion. The same Jesus whom the wise men traveled such great distances over several months to adore, we have the same privilege to worship in our churches and adoration chapels. The question is whether we take that presence of Jesus seriously or whether we take it for granted.

Jesus established the sacrament of the Eucharist so that he who is God-with-us could be with us in a communion of love. Each of us is called to ask whether the real presence of Jesus Christ in the tabernacle has any impact at all on our lives, or whether we live, practically, as if the tabernacle were empty or just full of bread.

The joy we experience at Christmas will be dependent upon whether we take Emmanuel seriously and strive to come to be with God who did so much and became so humble to be with us. Jesus, Emmanuel, is coming. May we greet him, sincerely, and develop the type of personal relationship with Jesus that Mary and Joseph had, so that we might experience his salvation and be with him in this world and forever in the next.

Grace and Peace,
Fr. R C R A

Confessions in the Area

Advent confessions will be held at St. Ann's Church on **Thurs. December 22, 9 am-Noon & 3:00-6:00pm**

Parish Office Holiday Hours

The Parish Office will be **CLOSED** from December 26-January 2, 2023.

Regular Office hours will resume Tuesday January 3, 2023. (Tuesday—Friday 9:30 am-4:00 pm)

2022 Tax Receipt Reminder

All donations to St. Margaret's parish or the Society for St. Vincent de Paul must be received by Friday, December 30, 2022 to be included on your 2022 tax receipt. Any gifts received after that date will be shown in the new year. Tax receipts will be mailed out the first week of February 2023.

Thank you for your generous support.

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