



Focus on the Word

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Isaiah 49.3-6; 1 Corinthians 1.1-3; John 1.29-34

Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Amen.

Pray for the Deceased

Emilie Mijares

Vanessa Kurpiewska, the victim of the stabbing at the High Park subway station on 8 December

Knights of Columbus

1.30 pm, 15 January

The next *Knights of Columbus* Meeting will be held at 1.30 pm on 15 January. All members are asked to Assemble in the North Classroom.



If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

2 Corinthians 5.17

Parish Week ☩ Sunday, 15 Jan. 2023

Saturday, 14 Jan.

8.00 am Mass: Int. Thanksgiving (Adrian Crutchley)
5.00 pm Mass: † Felicidade Antao (Margaret & Santan Lobo)

SUNDAY, 15 JAN. / 2-A

■ *Homilist: Fr. Edwin Galea*

9.00 am Mass: Int. Tina Abraham for Healing (family)
10.30 am Mass: † Lalita D'Souza (Joseph)
12.00 pm Mass: Int. Thanksgiving Sidney Lee (Jenny)
7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

Monday, 16 Jan.

■ *Cardinal Thomas Collins: Birthday (1947)*

8.00 am Mass: † Jerry Koenig (Ed & Marie Ridgeley)
7.00 pm Mass: Int. Adrian Crutchley (Mother Jane Martyn)

Tuesday, 17 Jan. / St. Anthony, abbot

8.00 am Mass: † Angelina Arellano (Lydia Dominguez)

Wednesday, 18 Jan.

8.00 am Mass: Int. 24th Wedding Anniversary, Emilio & Aurora Go (family)

Thursday, 19 Jan.

8.00 am Mass: † Alfred & Victoria Nagaratnam (family)

Friday, 20 Jan. / St. Sebastian, martyr

8.00 am Mass: † Alford Williams (Anastasia & Ashton)

Saturday, 21 Jan. / St. Agnes, virgin & martyr

8.00 am Mass: † Cerelina Velasco (family)
5.00 pm Mass: † Deceased members of Gomes & Mazumder families (David Mazumder)

SUNDAY, 22 JAN. / 3-A

■ *Homilist: Fr. Elias Chachati*

9.00 am Mass: † Cyrildo Alagaratnam (Shirani Hemachandra)
10.30 am Mass: Int. Thanksgiving (David Mazumder)
12.00 pm Mass: † Jerry Koenig (Kathleen Ryan)
7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

COMING UP

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22 & 23 Jan. 1st Communion Family Information Nights (7:30 pm)
26 Jan. ► St. Albert School Mass (1:00 pm)
29 Jan. 2nd Collection: **Maintenance**
5 Feb. Infant Baptism Parent/Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
7 Feb. St. Maria Goretti School 1st Reconciliation (9:30 pm)
12 Feb. Infant Baptism (1.30 pm);
- ► *Celebration of Marriage* Mass, with Bishop Nguyen (Cathedral, 2.30 pm)
13 & 14 Feb. Confirmation Family Information Nights (7:30 pm)

22 Feb.

Ash Wednesday;

- *Lent* begins; Day of Fast and Abstinence;
- Parish Mass (8.00 am);
- St. Maria Goretti School Liturgy (9.00 am);
- ► St. Albert School Liturgy (1.00 pm);
- Parish Mass (7.00 pm)

1 Mar.

St. Maria Goretti School Reconciliation

6 Mar.

Infant Baptism Parent/Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)

8 Mar.

► St. Albert School 1st Reconciliation (1:00 pm)

12 Mar.

Infant Baptism (1.30 pm)

25 Mar.

Wedding: Omotayo – Ogunleye (1:00 pm)

26 Mar.

2nd Collection: *ShareLife Appeal*

31 Mar.

Wedding: Jefferson – Richein (2:00 pm)

2 Apr.

Palm Sunday: *Holy Week* begins

6 Apr.

Holy Thursday: *Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper;*
- *Adoration* until midnight

7 Apr.

Good Friday: *The Passion of Our Lord*

9 Apr.

Easter Sunday: *Resurrection of Our Lord;*
2 Collections: (a) *Offertory*; (b) *Easter*

Website stmariagoretti.archtoronto.org

For more information on Parish activities, check pages 3 and following in the website bulletin.

1st Communion, Confirmation Information Meetings

Families with children ready to prepare as Candidates for:

FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION
are invited to attend one of two Information Meetings:

Monday or Tuesday - 23 or 24 January

Mass will be celebrated at 7.00 pm, and the *meeting* will follow immediately in the Church.

This invitation is extended to all families who have:

- Children in Grade 2 in our Catholic Schools;
- Children in private and public schools who are in the Saturday Sacramental Preparation classes which began in September.

We also welcome families with children in Catholic schools in Grade 3 or above, who have not yet received these Sacraments;

Families with students preparing to receive the Sacrament of:

CONFIRMATION

are invited to attend one of two Information Meetings:

Monday or Tuesday - 13 or 14 February

Mass will be celebrated at 7.00 pm, and the *meeting* will follow immediately in the Church.

RCIA, RCIC



Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults & Children

The RCIA meets on Friday evenings at 7.30 pm; the next meetings are on 13 & 20 January 2023. The RCIC meets at 10.00 am on Saturday mornings; the next meetings are on 14 & 21 January.

Please pray for the Neophytes from the Early Initiation Rite on 19 November 2022. Their MYSTAGOGY Period will end with the *Rite of Commissioning & Certificate Presentation* at the 5.00 pm Mass on Saturday, 28 January.

A Special Gift ALTAR FLOWERS

We thank the family of **Mireille Fontaine** for your gift of the two beautiful flower arrangements at the Altar following her funeral on 8 October. May she rest in peace.

☺ Your sabbath smile

I asked our dear old friend Maude how she lost her husband, Norman. She told me her sad story.

"Well, he needed a blood transfusion, but his blood type was not on record. So, the doctors asked me if I knew what it was, as they urgently needed to know in order to save my dear Norman's life. Tragically, I've never known his blood type, so I only had time to sit and say goodbye. I'll never forget how supportive my Norman was. Even as he was fading away, he kept on whispering to me, 'Be positive, be positive!'

That was my Norman! Always thinking of others."

Ordinary Time



The day following the Feast of the *Baptism of the Lord* marks the resumption of the liturgical season called ORDINARY TIME. There is nothing "ordinary" about Ordinary Time. Its name refers simply to the fact that weeks are listed by *ordinal* numbers; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.

During Ordinary Time, we examine the ordinary ways in which we celebrate the mysteries of God's Kingdom in our lives. Ordinary Time begins after Christmas season. It is interrupted a few weeks later by Lent and Easter; it resumes on the day after Pentecost, and continues until the beginning of a new Liturgical Year on the 1st Sunday of Advent.

During this longest of the liturgical season - 34 weeks altogether - we reflect on the message of Christ and on our role as a Christian community, in helping to bring about the *Kingdom of God* in the world. We focus on the work of being the Church: sharing the mission of Jesus to proclaim God's love.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI Memorial Mass, 7 pm, 21 February

Our Parish will hold a Memorial Mass for **Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI** at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 21 February.



Stewardship 2022 Receipts, 2023 Envelopes

The *Charitable Tax Receipts* for all recorded donations during 2022 are in the Vestibule for pick up at Mass. Many thanks to all our faithful parishioners for your generous support of our wonderful parish through your weekly stewardship! This is an act of honour to God, our Creator.

Parishioners who have not yet picked up their *2023 Sunday Offertory Envelopes* in the Vestibule are invited to do so. They are for *registered* parishioners; if you are new to the parish and have not registered, *welcome to our neighbourhood!* Go to the Office window, introduce yourself, and complete a *registration form*.

Parish Memorials

A lasting legacy: Remember **St. Maria Goretti Church** in your will. Such a gift would enable you to express your affection for your Parish in a tangible way. By leaving a bequest, you help to ensure the vitality of our ministries and the work we do for God's Kingdom in the name of Jesus. It is also a way to ensure that the beauty of our Church will be maintained for future years.

Our *legal title* is: "**St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church, Scarborough, Ontario.**" Correspondence is addressed to the *Pastor*, 717 Kennedy Road, Scarborough, Ontario M1K 2C1.

Prayer

"Dear God, please arm me with strength and make my way perfect. Make my feet like feet of a deer. Enable me to stand on heights. Broaden the path beneath me so that my ankles will not turn. Make me victorious this week. Amen!"

(Thanks to Antoinette Benedict.)



Benedict XVI

16 April 1927 – 31 December 2022

Sameer Advani, *Legionnaires of Christ*

(ZENIT News / Rome, 12.31.2022)

On 19 April 2005 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger walked hesitantly out onto the balcony of St Peter Basilica in Vatican City as the 265th leader of the Catholic Church. In a shy, almost apologetic tone he compared himself to his predecessor, telling the cheering thousands gathered below him that after the “great John Paul II,” the Cardinals had elected just “a simple, humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord.”

The contrast was hardly an exaggeration. Church officials across the world knew that Cardinal Ratzinger was a brilliant theologian who had courageously and even heroically defended Catholic doctrine in the confusing and turbulent years after the Second Vatican Council, but they also knew that humanly speaking he possessed little of the personal charisma, outgoing personality, infectious energy, and sense of the dramatic that had helped endear St. John Paul II to the world. Instead, Cardinal Ratzinger was quiet and reserved, a scholar more comfortable in the classroom.

His election as Pontiff was thus largely shrugged off at the time, even by commentators within the Church, as primarily a nod to continuity. Pope Benedict would guide the Church into the new post-modern world of relativism and radical scepticism along a course that had largely already been set out, in other words; no one expected him to dramatically shake things up.

No one foresaw that his final public Mass 8 years later would end with what the New York Times aptly described as a “deafening standing ovation that lasted for minutes.” No one foresaw that as we contemplate the extraordinary gift of his life and work, the faithful are already beginning to call him “Benedict the Great.”

A Spiritual Giant

Benedict XVI’s name and legacy will always be closely linked to his decision in February 2013 to resign from the Papacy: it made him the first Pope to voluntarily relinquish the office of Peter since Celestine V in 1294.

The decision, Pope Benedict said, was taken freely and was motivated by the realization that he no longer had the strength to adequately carry out all the tasks required of the Pope. But there was also more to the question than just pragmatism. For in Pope Benedict’s mind, it also opened up a new way for him to remain “at the side of the crucified Lord,” a new form in which he could participate in the ministry of Peter through the “service of prayer” instead of active governance. “The Lord is calling me to ‘climb the mountain,’ to devote myself even more to prayer and meditation,” he claimed in his last *Angelus* as Pontiff. “But this does not mean abandoning the Church. Indeed, if God is asking me to do this, it is so that I can continue to serve the Church with the same dedication and the same love with which I have done thus far, but in a way that is better suited to my age and my strength.”

This dramatic insistence on the absolute primacy of prayer in the life of every individual and the entire Church, and his corresponding understanding of Christianity as the ‘love story’ between God and humanity, is actually a side of Pope Benedict that has not been sufficiently underlined up until now; paradoxically, it could actually constitute his greatest legacy and mark him out a spiritual master for generations to come.

Pope Benedict was convinced, in fact, that at its very core Christianity was not a series of ideas, doctrines, and ethical commandments, but the living encounter with the God who as Love freely chose to enter into a relationship of love with each and every human being, and the vast majority of his meditations, homilies, conferences, and even his more theologically sophisticated writings all revolved around this simple, but profoundly spiritual central idea.

“God created the universe to enter into a love story with humankind. He created it so that love can exist,” he wrote when explaining the book of Genesis in 1986, for example. Salvation history was “not a small event, on a poor planet, in the immensity of the universe,” but “the motive for everything, the motive for creation,” he then added in 2008, before concluding: “everything is created so that this story can exist, the encounter between God and his creature.”

In *Deus Caritas Est* in 2005 he likewise proclaimed that “God is the absolute and ultimate source of all being; but this universal principle of creation – the Logos, primordial reason – is at the same time a lover with all the passion of a true love.” Two years later in his message for Lent he explained that God’s love for us was not only *agape*, the self-giving love of one who seeks the good of another, but also *eros*, or in other words the love of someone who desires to possess what he lacks, the love of someone who yearns for union with the beloved. “Eros is part of God’s very Heart: The Almighty awaits the ‘yes’ of his creatures as a young bridegroom that of his bride. On the Cross, it is God himself who begs the love of his creature: He is thirsty for the love of every one of us.”

Texts like these abound, and through them Pope Benedict interpreted the central tenets of Christianity – of creation, salvation history, the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, Mary, the Church, Baptism and the Eucharist – as the successive chapters in the love story between God and man, as the unfolding of what he called a “mysticism of personal love” in which God and man increasingly became one in spirit.

And if this deeply spiritual theological understanding of Christianity was not enough, Pope Benedict also left us a precious testimony to how it had shaped his own pilgrimage on earth. In the last days of his pontificate, for example, he beautifully described faith as “nothing other than the touch of God’s hand in the night of the world, and so – in the silence – to hear the word, to see love.” And speaking to those who were worried about the future of the Church after his abdication, he then added: “I should like to invite all of us to renew our firm confidence in the Lord, to entrust ourselves like children in God’s arms, certain that those arms always hold us, enabling us to press forward each day, even when the going is rough. I want everyone to feel loved by that God who gave his Son for us and who has shown us his infinite love. I want everyone to feel the joy of being a Christian.”

In conversation with Peter Seewald a few years later, he stated, “I see him [Jesus] directly before me. He is of course always great and full of mystery.” And just a few months before his death he wrote that “in light of the hour of judgement, the grace of being a Christian becomes all the more clear to me. It grants me knowledge, and indeed friendship, with the judge of my life, and thus allows me to pass confidently through the dark door of death.”

What all of this tells us is that while Pope Benedict has always been known and respected – even by his detractors – as the voice that has championed faith’s need for reason and reason’s need for faith, as the heroic defender of the Christian roots of Europe, and as the intellectual who perhaps more than anyone else in the 20th century has explored the meaning of Christian identity and mission in the modern world, he may very well be known to future generations not primarily as ‘Benedict the Theologian,’ but as ‘Benedict, the Mystic of God’s love for humanity.’

A Theology for our time... and for all times

None of this is meant to detract from the quantity and quality of Pope Benedict’s theology, of course. Hundreds of scholarly articles and books have already been written about his Christology, Ecclesiology, Theology of Revelation, and Anthropology, and thousands more will almost certainly be produced. The sheer volume of his output – the Collected Works of his writings span 15 volumes, and most of these are well over a thousand pages – means that experts will be poring over his texts for years to come.





Samson and Harriet Paul, with daughter Nicole, after their 40th Wedding Anniversary blessing, 1 January.



RCIA and RCIC participants at the most recent Bible Presentation rite, 6 January.



The Sanctuary after the funeral Mass for Agapito De Rosales, 10 January.



Servers for the St. Maria Goretti School Mass, 11 January.





*Previous photos: Families celebrate the joy of Christmas.
This photo: Participants in the Baptism Prep meeting, 2 Jan.*