



Parish Week † Sunday, 5 Jan. 2025

Saturday, 4 Jan. / St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

- 8.00 am Mass: Int. Thanksgiving Birthday, Mario Francis, & Wedding Anniversary (family)
- 2.00 pm Wedding: Jermaine Barr & Rochelle D'Mello
- 5.00 pm Mass: † Gabriel & Francis Ancheas (Vincent Ambrose)

SUNDAY, 5 JAN. / EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

■ Homilist: Deacon Ramon Villardo

- 9.00 am Mass: † Louis Francis (family)
- 10.30 am Mass: † Aloysius Bastiampillai (family)
- 12.00 pm Mass: † Jocelyn Villacorta (family)
- 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

Monday, 6 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Sebastian & Mildred Gomes
- 7.00 pm Mass: † Holy Souls in Purgatory (Tessie Mendonca)
- 7.40 pm Infant Baptism Parent / Godparent meeting

Tuesday, 7 Jan. / St. André Bessette, *religious*

- 8.00 am Mass: † Jim Harvey (wife)

Wednesday, 8 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Barbara Gacusana (Mom, Evelyn)

Thursday, 9 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: Int. Alexandra D'Cunha (Esme)

Friday, 10 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Albin & Pascalina Gomes (family)

Saturday, 11 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Andres Bustamante (family)
- 5.00 pm Mass: † Roberto Poblete (Nerissa P. Espiritu Santo)
- RCIA Separate Initiation Rite

SUNDAY, 12 JAN. / BAPTISM OF THE LORD

■ Homilist: Fr. Edwin Galea

- 9.00 am Mass: † Lydia Marquez (family)
- 10.30 am Mass: † Venustiano Ypil (Aida Tonks)
- 12.00 pm Mass: † Cerelina Velasco (family & friend)
- 1.30 pm Infant Baptisms
- 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo



Mother of Perpetual Help

Let Mary bring peace into your life. Pray for your special intentions at the Monday Novena Mass to *Our Mother of Perpetual Help*. Rosary at 6.40 pm, Mass at 7.00.

O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

Focus on the Word

Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.2-6; Matthew 2.1-12

O God, who on this day revealed your Only begotten Son the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory. Amen.

Pray for the Deceased

29 December 2024

Bill Buchanan, Lino Christie, Antoinette Dias,

The 5 victims of the mass shooting in Washington State in October.

5 January 2025

Marina Generoso Cadavis, Ariel Gomez, Rosalyn Rambarose, Edwin Salve

Lisa Lopez-Galvan, the DJ killed in the mass shooting at the Kansas City Super bowl parade in February.

Liturgy Notes

5 JANUARY: ■ Feast of the Epiphany

The Nativity Scene is complete today with the addition of the figures of the *Three Magi*. These remarkable individuals were not Jewish, but they were completely caught up with looking for Jesus. They poured over the Scriptures to find out where he would be born. To reach Bethlehem, they rode camels and traveled by the light of a star. After their epic journey, they wanted to give their gifts to the newborn King right away!



12 JANUARY: ■ Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

For this feast, we renew our *Baptism Promises*.

■ End of the liturgical Christmas Season

We remove our remaining Christmas decorations and dismantle the Nativity Scene. Parents: this is your last chance to take the annual photo of your children at the Scene in our Church.

COMING UP

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- 6 Jan. Infant Baptism Parent Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
- 12 Jan. Infant Baptism (1:30 pm)
- 16 Jan. St. Albert School Mass (1 pm)
- 20 Jan. 1st Communion Family Information Night [A] (7 pm)
- 21 Jan. 1st Communion Family Information Night [B] (7 pm)
- 22 Jan. St. Maria Goretti School Mass (9 am)
- 26 Jan. 2nd Collection: *Maintenance*
- 3 Feb. Infant Baptism Parent Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
- 9 Feb. Infant Baptism (1:30 pm)
- 23 Feb. 2nd Collection: *Maintenance*
- 5 Mar. Ash Wednesday;
- Lent begins; Day of Fast and Abstinence

Website

stmariagoretti.archtoronto.org

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

1st Reconciliation, 1st Communion Information Meetings

Parents with children enrolled as Candidates for

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

FOR ST. ALBERT AND ST. MARIA GORETTI SCHOOLS:
Monday or Tuesday - 20 or 21 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 have been enrolled in the Saturday Sacramental Preparation classes, which begin each year in September.

We also welcome:

- Families with children enrolled in Catholic schools in Grade 3 or above, and who have not yet received these Sacraments;
- Families with children in private and public schools who have just moved into our parish and would like information on enrolling the children in our Saturday classes *next* September, to prepare for these Sacraments in 2026.

RCIA, RCIC

*Rites of Christian Initiation
of Adults & Children*



The RCIA meets Friday evenings at 7.30 pm; the next meetings are on 3 & 10 January 2025. The RCIC meets Saturday mornings; the next meetings are on 4 & 11 January.

Sponsors needed

We are currently seeking sponsors for the RCIA and RCIC. Your willingness to act as a sponsor will help another person to move closer to Jesus, and closer to the Salvation he won for us.

Separate Initiation Rite 5 pm Mass, 11 January

Please remember in your prayers the Candidates in our RCIA and RCIC processes who will celebrate their Initiation at the 5.00 pm Mass on 11 January. May God bless them and their families.

Changes for our Parish Records

Please notify the Parish Office in person after Sunday morning Mass, or by phone at 416-261-0076, if you:

- Have had a change of address
- Have a new phone number, e-mail or cell phone

A simple phone call would keep our parish records updated and eliminate unnecessary postage and returned mail.

A Special Gift ALTAR FLOWERS

We thank the family of **Lina Vitello** for their gift of the four memorial flower arrangements in our Sanctuary after her funeral Mass at St. Joseph Chapel at Holy Cross Cemetery on 28 July 2023. May she rest in peace.

The Monthly Devotions of the Liturgical Year

If you read the PARISH WEEK column, and follow the FOCUS ON THE WORD and LITURGY NOTES, you can keep track of the feasts and devotional seasons of the Liturgical year, and be reminded to focus your prayer on a different aspect of our faith each month.

January	HOLY NAME OF JESUS
February	HOLY FAMILY
March	ST. JOSEPH
April	BLESSED SACRAMENT
May	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
June	SACRED HEART OF JESUS
July	PRECIOUS BLOOD
August	IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
September	SEVEN SORROWS OF MARY
October	HOLY ROSARY
November	POOR SOULS IN PURGATORY
December	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Knights of Columbus

Upcoming events



The Knights of Columbus are a Catholic men's fraternal organization that support the spiritual growth of its members through charity and service. Watch for upcoming events, and feel free to talk to them about participating and personal development.

Sunday School *Christmas / New Year break*

The last *Sunday School for Kids* before Christmas:
at the 10.30 Mass on **15 December 2024**.

The Sunday School will resume:
at the 10.30 Mass on **5 January 2025**.

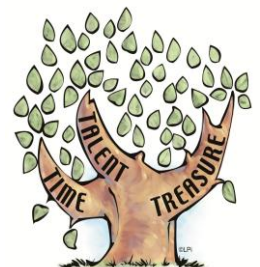
Stewardship

2024 Receipts, 2025 Envelopes

Soon, the Charitable *Tax Receipts* for all recorded donations during 2024 will be in the Vestibule, for pick up after 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 *Sunday Offertory Envelopes* for this year are invited to do so in the Vestibule. They are for *registered* parishioners; if you are new to the parish and are not registered, *welcome to our neighbourhood!* Go to the Office window, introduce yourself, and complete a *registration form*.



Christmas Flowers

PATRONS

Corine Maulion

Large Arrangement

IN HONOUR OF

**All Souls in Purgatory
Babel family
Fely Mawirat Gatcho & family
Jovy & Renie Lacson & family
Corbillon-Racoya family**

IN MEMORY OF

**All Souls
Deceased Baraoils family members
Aloysius Bastiampillai
Deceased Bermundo family members
Deceased Camacho family members
Deceased Contreras family members
Deceased Delaney family members
Deceased Gesmunto-Canayunan family
Kavitha Deschamp
Ramon Sr. & Juanita Gatchalian
S. & K. Gittens
Deceased Gomes family members
Liu Tseng Hsiang & Liu Fang Chin Mei
Raymond & Angustia Ng Tong
Deceased Jimenez-Pantano family members
Deceased Knebl family members
Joseph & Ann Liao
Deceased Macabali family members
Noriel & Resy Mendoza
Arjune & Nandrani Singh
Elaine Singh
Deceased Thangosain & Sriarthamohan family
Eileen Wright
Our departed loved ones**

Small Arrangement

IN HONOUR OF

**Baby Jesus
Margarita Belino
Mulla family
Domingo & Leonisa Santos**

IN MEMORY OF

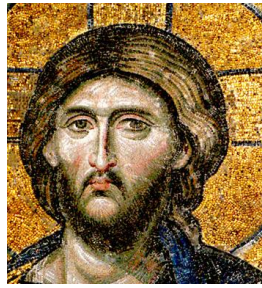
**Dioscora & Espiridion Antigua
Deceased Durano family members
Rufino & Emiliana Espinosa
Deceased Laurel family members
Ananias Lim
Peter Joseph Liu
Deceased Magdadaro family members
Linda & Teofisto Magdadaro Jr.
Michele, Maria, Matteo Morra
Deceased Mulla family members
Paz & Jose Segador
Felisa & Juan B. Trinidad
Isabel & Jose Trinidad
S. Yacintha**



RCLIA † Stories of Conversion

Gad Elmaleh

Why is France's Most Popular Jewish Comedian Converting?



Gad Elmaleh, France's most popular Jewish comedian, who has often referenced his Jewish identity onstage, has surprised the Jews of France and his fans world-wide by announcing that he is converting to Catholicism. Think how Americans would feel if Jerry Seinfeld or Barbra Streisand became Catholic.

Gad (a Hebrew name, one of the twelve sons of the Patriarch Jacob) was born in Casablanca to traditional Moroccan Jewish parents. He attended Jewish school. At the age of 17, he emigrated with his family to Canada. Later they moved to Paris. He was voted the "funniest man in France" and has been nominated for the French equivalent of an Oscar.

So why is he converting to Catholicism?

Is it the influence of three Catholic friends, including Charlotte Marie Casiraghi, a princess from the royal family of Monaco?

Could it be rebellion? In an interview on French television, he told how, at the age of six in Casablanca, he, with his father and sister, walked past a church. His father told him, "You see this building? You do not enter there." Gad recounted that he was "tempted" by the forbidden. He and his sister later stole into the building. The statue of the Virgin Mary "floored" him. He was also awed by the quiet and "calmness" of the cathedral, contrasted to the loud prayers of the Moroccan synagogue.

Gad's parents do not approve of his decision. Moroccan Jews are descendants of the Spanish Jews who, faced with the *Edict of Expulsion* of 1492, chose to relinquish all their property and leave Spain rather than convert to Christianity.

Gad asked his parents to appear in a film he was making about a Jew who converts to Christianity. On camera, he revealed to them that he is that Jew. His mother, unscripted, exclaimed, "You're changing your God, so you may as well change your parents."

Gad himself said his decision is for spiritual reasons. When he first saw that statue in the Church at the age of six, he "fell in love at first sight." Later, the "Virgin Marie took me under her wing."

He gradually began asking the Virgin Mary to help him, "especially before shows" when he apparently felt anxiety, and he experienced a response.

The Personal God

Moroccan Jews are known to uphold Jewish tradition. Gad Elmaleh grew up in a home imbued with Jewish heritage. In the ancient world, rife with worship of various deities, Abraham, the first Jew, taught about the existence of an all-powerful God with whom he had a personal relationship. God called him, "Abraham, who loves Me." Judaism rejects any embodiment of God, and also the need for it. Yet, human beings crave form. How can they have a relationship with a formless God?

The God that Judaism introduced to the world cannot be seen, but can be heard. At Mt. Sinai, God revealed Himself through the spoken word. God showed Himself in the Ten Commandments as the God who intervenes in history for their benefit. This is a God who loves us and saves us, not only in the mega events like the Exodus, but also in the daily challenges of our individual lives.

At the same time, God is transcendent, larger than the cosmos, beyond time and space, infinite.

Judaism has different names for God, referring to different aspects of the Infinite as revealed to human beings. Two names are used in every blessing, where God is addressed both as Y-H-W-H and as **Elokim**. Y-H-W-H represents God as transcendent, all-loving, and all-merciful. **Elokim** represents God in nature, in the nitty-gritty of life, behind both the unexpected check in the mail and the washing machine that breaks down. God has no concrete form, but He manifests in our life in concrete ways.

Personal Prayer

Throughout Jewish history, Jews have had an intimate relationship with God through personal prayer. Moses, when his sister Miriam was stricken with leprosy, prayed, "Please, God, heal her." King David poured out his heart spontaneously to God in what have become known as the Psalms of David. We read those psalms from a book, but David forged them from his heart.

Yet, after the destruction of the Temple, the sages composed set prayers to be recited three times a day. For most Jews thereafter, the formal prayers of the *siddur* replaced personal prayer instead of augmenting it. This gave rise to the unfortunate phenomenon of "praying by rote," in which Jews speak to God like they are speaking to an answering machine.

A word of warning: God doesn't like whining. So, when you speak to God in personal prayer, start with thanking God for everything you have before you appeal to Him for what you lack.

A person whose business is failing or who is facing a health crisis or whose love life is floundering or who is nervous before going on stage can speak to God, with the faith that God has the ability to turn around every situation. The product of such reaching out is not always a spectacular rescue (although sometimes it is), but it is always the forging of an intimate relationship with the God who loves you and does what is ultimately best for you.

The television interviewer asked Gad: "What's Jewish about you? One word." Gad replied, "*Esprit*," the **spirit**. Although often obscured by more mundane passions, the Jewish soul longs for an intimate relationship with God.

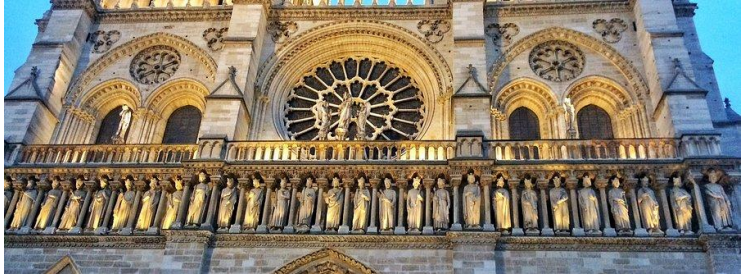
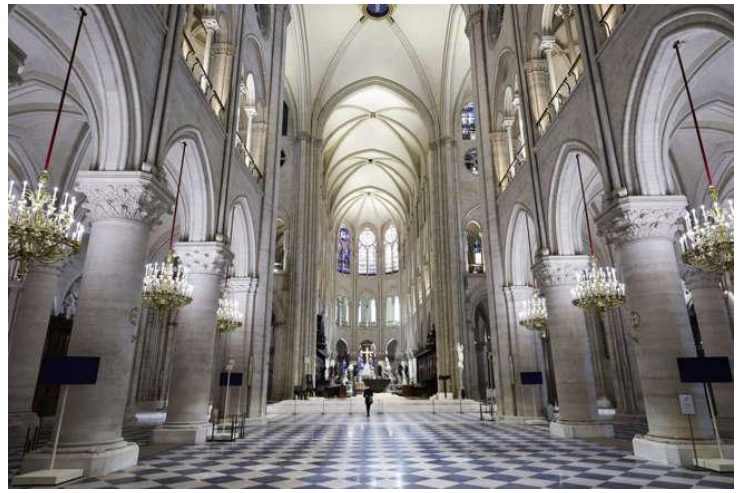


Christmas Caroling 2024

Our Parish Choristers bring the joy of the Christmas Season to the Retirement Residences and Nursing Homes in our community.









Notre Dame de Paris

A blessed restoration

In the 4th century, Paris, on the Île de la Cité, became the Christian capital of the Frankish kingdom. The city's real growth began in the 12th century after the Norman invasions. The city became a place of artistic and intellectual activity, with colleges and a university of philosophy and theology.

At the same time, the *Crusades* to Jerusalem, to recover the Holy Land shrines from Muslim occupation, and pilgrimages to *Santiago de Compostela* in Spain saw thousands of faithful travel along the roads. The Île de la Cité was a crucial crossing point over the Seine, and the faithful flocked to the Cité district. Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris, began the construction of a new and vast cathedral to accommodate the faithful. In the 13th century alone, the population of Paris doubled. St. Louis brought back the relics of Christ's Passion from Jerusalem. They arrived in Paris in 1239. The king carried them in procession to Notre-Dame. The relics were later kept in the Sainte-Chapelle until the Revolution. They were transferred to the treasury of Notre-Dame in 1806.

The cathedral expanded to become a model of religious architecture. During the Renaissance, tastes evolved, and its appeal waned. In the 17th century, through the vow of Louis XIII, France was placed under the protection of the Virgin. A new high altar was installed by Louis XIV. More renovations took place in the 18th century. The Cathedral was damaged by weather and the Revolution. Victor Hugo's amazing story, "*The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*," boosted interest in the Cathedral, and the French state decided to restore it in the 19th century. It was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991. It is a major center of Christian worship and the most visited monument in France.

Since the 12th century, an altar dedicated to Mary has been located against the southeastern pillar of the cathedral. This site has been a focal point of devotion since the Middle Ages. In the 19th century, the architect Viollet-le-Duc placed there a statue of the Virgin with Child known as "Notre Dame de Paris," or the "Virgin of the Pillar."

This sculpture dates back to the mid-14th century. It was originally in the Saint-Aignan chapel of the former cloister of the Canons on the Ile de la Cité. In 1818, it was transferred to Notre-Dame to be placed on the trumeau of the Portal of the Virgin, replacing the 13th century Virgin that was destroyed in 1793, during the Revolution.

The Notre Dame de Paris Statue is a classic depiction of the Virgin Mary holding the Child Jesus. It is associated with piety and protection.

This statue holds great significance for the faithful and visitors to the Cathedral. It symbolizes Mary's divine motherhood as well as her relationship with Jesus. For many believers, it also represents comfort and hope.

The statue has survived several major events in history, including the devastating fire in the cathedral in April 2019. Although the Cathedral sustained significant damage, the statue of the Virgin with Child was miraculously preserved and restored. Over the centuries, the statue of the Virgin with Child has inspired numerous artists, writers and thinkers. It has been depicted in painting, sculptures, poems and stories, testifying to its cultural and spiritual impact.