



1st Communion Candidates, 20 January 2025 Information Night

Parish Week † Sunday, 26 Jan. 2025

Saturday, 25 Jan. / Conversion of St. Paul, apostle

- 8.00 am Mass: † Jizi Primero (Edison & Jiyi)
 5.00 pm Mass: Int. Thanksgiving William Cenizal
 on his Birthday (family)

SUNDAY, 26 JAN. / 3 - C

- Homilist: Deacon Ramon Villardo
- 2nd Collection: Maintenance

- 9.00 am Mass: † Cynthia Espellardo Sison (Emelita Gotera)
 10.30 am Mass: † Eduardo Gotera Sr. (family)
 12.00 pm Mass: † George, Marguerite, Ablah & Adel Chachati
 (Tessie Mendonca)
 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

Monday, 27 Jan. / St. Angela Merici, virgin

- 8.00 am Mass: † Fernando & Beatriz Remedios (family)
 7.00 pm Mass: † Paula Collins

Tuesday, 28 Jan. / St. Thomas Aquinas, priest & doctor

- 8.00 am Mass: † Crofton Martin 2nd death Anniversary
 (Jane & Adrian)

Wednesday, 29 Jan.

- 8.00 am Mass: Int. Thanksgiving Fiona Francis
 on her Birthday (family)

Thursday, 30 Jan.

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

Friday, 31 Jan. / St. John Bosco, priest

- 8.00 am Mass: † Michael Morra (Carol)

Saturday, 1 Feb.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Maria & Lawrie Coutinho (Tessie Mendonca)
 5.00 pm Mass: † Remedios Estavillo (Ong family)

SUNDAY, 2 FEB. / PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

- Homilist: Fr. Elias Chachati

- 9.00 am Mass: † Pasqualina Grande (family)
 10.30 am Mass: † Matilda Maria Naddaf (Esme)
 12.00 pm Mass: Int. Amy Koenig (Bertina)
 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

Focus on the Word

3rd Sunday Ordinary Time, Year C

Nehemiah 8.2-10; 1 Corinthians 12.12-30; Luke 1.1-4;4.14-21

Almighty ever-living God, direct our actions according to your good pleasure, that in the name of your beloved Son we may abound in good works. Amen.

Pray for the Deceased

The 5 victims of the Christmas market attack in Magdeburg, Germany.



World Day of the Sick 11 February

The ministry of Jesus to the sick is central to the life of the Church. 11 February (Memorial of *Our Lady of Lourdes*) is designated as the World Day of the Sick, which highlights the healing ministry of the Church. It reminds us that service to the sick and suffering cannot be neglected. It recognizes the great efforts of doctors, nurses, health care institutions and pastoral care givers to restore health to those afflicted with illness and disease.

To mark this observance in the Church, at 6.30 pm the CWL will lead the recitation of the Holy Rosary, prior to Mass at 7.00 pm. In addition, special Prayers of Intercession will be offered.

Blessing of St. Blaise: 3 February

The feast of **St. Blaise** is on 3 February. Parishioners will have the benefit of the traditional BLESSING OF THROATS *collectively* at the end of all Sunday Masses, 1 & 2 February, and *individually* at the Masses on 3 February:

“Through the prayers of St. Blaise, may God free you from ailments of the throat and from every other evil. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

COMING UP

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- 3 Feb. Infant Baptism Parent Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
 5 Feb. ► St. Albert School 1st Reconciliation & School Rec. (9.30 am)
 6 Feb. St. Maria Goretti School 1st Reconciliation (9.00 am)
 7 Feb. St. Maria Goretti School Reconciliation (9.00 am)
 9 Feb. Infant Baptism (1:30 pm)
 10 Feb. Confirmation Family Information Night [A] (7 pm)
 11 Feb. **Our Lady of Lourdes; World Day of Prayer for the Sick;**
 - Confirmation Family Information Night [B] (7 pm)
 15 Feb. **CWL: Installation of New Executive 2025-26 (6 pm),**
 & Family Day Celebration (6.30 pm)
 23 Feb. 2nd Collection: **Maintenance**
 1 Mar. CHALICE presentation at all Masses;
 ► WVE Elimination Chamber (Rogers Centre)
 5 Mar. Ash Wednesday;
 - Lent begins; Day of Fast and Abstinence

Website stmariagoretti.archtoronto.org

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

Sacramental Preparation

1st Reconciliation prep

Remember in your prayers our parish youth who are preparing for their **First Reconciliation**:

29 & 31 Jan.: **1st Reconciliation Instructions**, 9.30 am
ST. MARIA GORETTI SCHOOL: (*For students, in the school.*)

30 Jan. & 3 Feb: **1st Reconciliation Instructions**, 1.00 pm
ST. ALBERT SCHOOL: (*For students, in the school.*)

1st Reconciliation dates

Grade 2 students in St. Albert and St. Maria Goretti Schools will be making their **first Confessions** in February:

St Albert School Wednesday 5 February 9.30 am

St. Maria Goretti School Thursday 6 February 9.00 am

Confirmation Information Meetings

Families with students ready to prepare for the Sacrament of **Confirmation** are invited to attend one of two Info Meetings:

Monday or Tuesday - 10 or 11 February

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

Saturday Confirmation Classes *begin 1 Feb.*

Classes will begin on Saturday, 1 February 2025, for students who are not in our Parish schools and who wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is the Sacrament that completes our Christian Initiation. Wilma and Lillian will be the instructors.

The classes begin at 10.00 am, and last one hour. Registration will be conducted on 1 February, and a calendar for the series will be provided. For information, call: **Lillian**, 647-909-6425.

RCIA, RCIC

*Rites of Christian Initiation
of Adults & Children*



The RCIA meets Friday evenings at 7.30 pm; the next meetings are on 24 & 24 January. The RCIC meets Saturday mornings; the next meetings are on 25 January and 1 Feb.

A Special Gift ALTAR FLOWERS

We thank the family of **Marlo Barbero** for their gift of the five beautiful flower arrangement in our Sanctuary after his funeral Mass on 22 July 2023. May he rest in peace.

CWL Family Day celebration 15 February

Our parish *Catholic Women's League* will host a Family Day celebration on Saturday, 15 February, following the Installation of the CWL Executive after the 5.00 pm Mass.

The *Catholic Women's League* calls its members to grow in faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

Celebrate the Year of Jubilee *and the Elevation of Cardinal Francis Leo*

Regional Eucharistic Celebrations with Cardinal Leo and the Auxiliary Bishops of our archdiocese

Regional Masses that will be held throughout the Archdiocese of Toronto in the near future. There will be two groups of Masses:

[1] One Mass in each of the four regions of the archdiocese will launch the Jubilee Year and also provide an opportunity to give thanks for the elevation of Frank Cardinal Leo to the College of Cardinals. At these Masses, Cardinal Leo will preside.

[2] Other celebrations will take place at the remaining Pilgrim Churches in each of the four regions of the archdiocese to complete the launch the Jubilee Year. At these Masses, the local Auxiliary Bishop will preside.

For those wishing to obtain a Jubilee indulgence, requirements include receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, attending Mass and offering prayers for the intention of the Holy Father.

Confessions will be offered one hour prior to all Masses noted below; Mass will begin at 7:00 pm

EASTERN REGION Masses will take place as follows:

Wednesday, 29 January 2025, St. Gregory Church, Oshawa
(Bishop Nguyen to preside)

Wednesday, 19 February 2025, St. Barnabas Parish, Scarborough
(Cardinal Leo to preside)

CENTRAL REGION Masses will take place as follows:

Wednesday, 12 February 2025, St. Paul Basilica, Toronto
(Bishop Kasun to preside)

Thursday, 20 February 2025, St. Mary Parish, 130 Bathurst Street
(Bishop Kasun to preside)

Tuesday, 25 February 2025, St. Edward the Confessor Parish,
North York (Cardinal Leo to preside)

ANCOP *Answering the Cry Of the Poor*

Many thanks to all Parishioners for their kind response to the appeal made by **Christine De Castro** at our Masses on 18/19 January on behalf of the ANCOP mission to the Philippines this March, with the team from TCDSB. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. For more details, see page 5 in the website bulletin.

Stewardship

2024 Receipts,
2025 Envelopes

The Charitable *Tax Receipts* for all recorded donations during 2024 will soon 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 are reminded to pick up their 2025 *Sunday Offertory Envelopes* in the Vestibule. They are for registered parishioners only; if you are new to the parish and have not yet registered, *welcome to our neighbourhood!* Go to the Office window, introduce yourself, and complete a *registration form*.



A personal Confession about Penance

A new Catholic reflects on the power of this Sacrament

When I was considering becoming Catholic, there were a few issues that were hard to accept. I was not averse to the concept of Confession, but I definitely didn't understand it in the fullness of Biblical teaching.

While growing up, my Protestant friends told me that it was a bad practice of telling all your secrets to a man on the other side of a screen. Why not just confess to God? As I began to learn more about it, I was surprised to realize that this Sacrament is much deeper than I first imagined. Confession is only a part of the Sacrament of Penance. This Sacrament contains the concepts of 1) Conversion, 2) Confession, 3) Penance, 4) Forgiveness, and 5) Reconciliation.

The 1st part of this Sacrament, Conversion, is about returning to God by recognizing that we need Him. The Catechism explains it as "The first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin." This is the point where you realize you have sinned; you pray and ask God to show you how you have failed, you look at the Ten Commandments and you examine your conscience.

The more I understood this part, the more I liked it. The benefits of this part of the Sacrament allow one to really take a close look, on a continual basis, at which part of their life they are failing to live up to God's commandments. In Confession, they can see over time how they have improved. I could see how this Conversion would keep them open and honest in front of God, and keep them close to His Will.

As far as Confession, it is the next step after Conversion. To disclose these sins to a Priest in a *confession* is, according to the Catechism, an act of "acknowledgement and praise - of the holiness of God and his mercy toward sinful men."

Penance is the part of this Sacrament that first calls for an interior "sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again." As the Catechism puts it, "Without this, such penances remain sterile and false. *Interior conversion* urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance." So, an interior posture of conversion, of sadness for your offense to God, is the most necessary step, and often the portion of Penance prescribed by the Priest at this point of the Sacrament is really a very small token amount of penitential work. It's an *outward* sign, of an *inward* reality.

Now, the big question: *Who has the power to forgive sins in the New Testament?* Only Jesus. Obviously!

This is what I always thought. It was ingrained in my head: "Only Jesus can forgive your sins." It is very true that Jesus forgives sins. However, the Bible tells us (John 20:21-23):

"[Jesus] said to them, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit. Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; and those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'"

These verses blew me out of the water! I had read John's Gospel before, but that part never sank in. Meditating on this leads to the realization that Jesus is not just talking about a brother forgiving a sin committed against him by his brother. Obviously, that is needed. Jesus often speaks about the need to forgive others. But these verses are about the *Apostles being given the power to forgive or retain sins*. This relates to the Apostolic Tradition handed down by Jesus. According to the Catechism, "by virtue of his divine authority he gives this power to men to exercise in his name."



Through this absolution of sins, we are reconciled to God and to the Church. The Catechism says that "Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion."

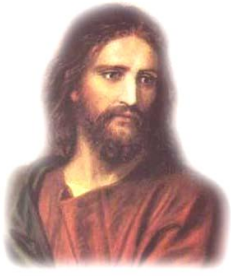
All Christians agree that we need to be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). The issue is *how*. I have never heard Catholics teach against the need to personally forgive one another; nor that we should not pray and confess our sins to God. All Christians agree on this. What is missing among non-Catholics is the *reconciliation to the Church* that is offered in the sacrament of Penance. The Church is in fact harmed by our sin, because Catholics believe that the Church is the Body of Christ. And we, as Christians, are part of that Body. Thus, the sin we commit, doesn't just harm us, but it is harmful to the entire Body of Christ, the Church. So how do you ask the Church for forgiveness?

As a new Catholic, Confession has been a very new experience for me. By the time of my First Confession, I definitely believed in the Sacrament, and wanted to make a good confession. I had heard of the wonderful effects of Absolution. I also was nervous; but I was fairly certain that this whole Confession thing was a good idea, and truly Biblical. I could see how, in my past, there were times I was in active rebellion against God, and remained unrepentant. That seriously injured my relationship with God and the Church, to the point of moving me in the opposite direction of God's will. I think that there is a safety net for this, and it's found in the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

And I must confess, that those wonderful effects I had heard of are not merely myth. There is something amazingly comforting and wonderful in hearing those words:

"May God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

I have been quite surprised at how emotional the act of confession has been, and I am quite without words to describe the peace that follows!



Reconciliation

“We know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ...I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life that I now live in

the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2.16)

“If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new! All this from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

(2 Corinthians 5.17-20)

[I] **By his Passion, Death and Resurrection**, Jesus Christ has enabled us to enter into the glory of the Kingdom of God. We can be saints. At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus said, “The time has come, and the Kingdom of heaven is near. Repent and believe the Good News.” (Mark 1.15)

[II] **By our abuse of free will**, we lost our inheritance in the Kingdom of God, at the beginning of human history, through Original Sin. Through sin we are condemned to death. By his death on the Cross, Jesus paid the price of our redemption. Through him, we have life: “...in him, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins.” (Colossians 1.14) This is the mystery of Good Friday: by his wounds, we are healed. The mystery of our Baptism is this: we are washed in the Precious Blood of the Lamb. Through Baptism, we are released from the state of Original Sin by the power of Christ conveyed through the Holy Spirit.

[III] **Although we are freed from Original Sin through our Baptism**, the disciples of Christ remain prone to the temptations of the Adversary, who is the Prince of the World. As long as we live in the world, we are liable to commit sin. The reward of sin is death.

[IV] **Christ empowered his Church** to continue the work of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5), so that no person would need to suffer eternal death. Specifically, he commissioned the Apostles to lead people to repentance, and to forgive them in his name (John 20.23) No disciple of Jesus, who has experienced his love, in Baptism, needs to be strangled by the guilt of sin, the curse of human living. Jesus wants us to be free, to serve our Father (Colossians 1.14). Jesus has given the Church the Holy Spirit (John 20.23) to guide it in this work, this ministry of reconciliation.

[V] **The Sacrament of Reconciliation** (Confession) consists of four essential dynamics:

Repentance, Confession, Absolution, Amendment

We *repent* our sinfulness; we *confess* our sins to the representative of Christ, the priest; we receive the confirmation of our forgiveness through the *absolution*; we perform an act of *amendment* to manifest our renewed heart.

Confession

Enter: Enter the Confessional or Reconciliation Room. If anonymity is desired, use a kneeler facing a screen, beside the priest’s area. Most reconciliation rooms have a chair and kneeler facing the priest, to permit face-to-face confession. Begin by making the Sign of the Cross.

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was... These are my sins.”

Confess: Confess your sins. It is helpful to begin with a brief (one sentence) introduction, so that the priest has some idea of your background. Serious mortal sins should be confessed as accurately and as honestly as possible. With less, venial sins, it is sometimes better to confess the more frequent or persistent problem areas.

If you have attended a General Absolution, at which you received absolution for serious sins, mention the sins at this time (and the fact that you were at a General Absolution) to allow the spiritual direction that is part of the Church’s ministry.

Accept Penance: The priest then imposes a penance. This will correspond to the seriousness and nature of your sins. The penance should be fulfilled as soon as possible after confession. After the penance has been confirmed, the priest will invite you to prepare for the Absolution by saying something like, “Express your contrition and prepare for the Absolution.” Express sorrow for your sins in a brief act, such as:

“Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

A longer form:

“O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishment; but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your Grace, to sin no more, and to avoid the occasion of sin.”



ANCOP

Answering the Cry Of the Poor

ANCOP Canada is an international organization with global humanitarian operations in countries in Africa and Asia. We currently operate in the African nations of Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. In Asia, ANCOP Canada is present in India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal. We extend help to a vast pool of poor, underprivileged children.



From the Archives of the Knights of Columbus

Executive Installation, 2023. Dennis Wahking, conducting. The Knights of Columbus (K of C) is a Catholic fraternal service order founded by Blessed Michael J. McGivney. It was founded on 29 March 1882 as a mutual benefit society for working-class and immigrant Catholics. It has grown to support refugee relief, Catholic education, local parishes and dioceses, and global Catholic social causes. As of 2024, the Knights had over 2.1 million members around the world. Women may participate through female auxiliaries, and boys under 18 may join the Squires.



January Wellbeing

Tips for Winter Wellness

Winter brings us shorter days, more time spent inside and the flu season! Our immune system has a lot to deal with during the winter months. Not only do people tend to get more colds and coughs during this time of year, but the lack of sunshine can have a big effect on our mood and physical health. There are a few things we can do to take extra care of our health at this time of year, whether by boosting our immune system or better dealing with the harsh environment.

1. Wash Your Hands

This is classic advice and now more than ever we've been repeatedly told of the importance of hand washing. Washing your hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and then throughout our community. It's one of the easiest and most effective ways to avoid getting sick. If you don't have soap and water nearby, use anti-bacterial hand sanitizer. You don't realize just how many germs you come into contact with everyday and just being mindful of hand cleanliness can make a big difference. *And:* Try to not touch your eyes, ears, nose or mouth throughout the day. The nail beds in your fingers harbour many germs that can make their way into your body through open areas.

2. Eat the Rainbow

Make sure you're filling yourself up with lots of colourful produce. Whether it's fresh or frozen, produce is the most important health tool money can buy. Eating a variety of fruit and vegetables will ensure you get all the essential vitamins and minerals you need, especially in the winter when there is less sunlight and less time outside. A healthy, nutrient dense diet is the best defense against sickness of any kind.

3. Get Outside

Winter weather is not to everyone's liking. However, make an effort to get outside in the light and fresh air at least once a day. Not only is it good for replenishing your vitamin D needs (which is a key nutrient that aids our immune system and is one that most people lack during the winter), but it also frees you from the confinement of your home. Being cooped up indoors for too long is not good for your mind or body. During the winter, mould can build up in the home which can trigger congestion, respiratory infections, coughing and even asthma attacks for those who have that disease. Do yourself a favour and get out of your home.

4. Move Your Body

Exercise is important throughout the year, but even more so in the winter when we are naturally more sedentary. A regular workout routine is a prime booster for your immunity. It reduces the risk of cold and flu, while improving your mood and raising your energy levels that can be so easily zapped in the winter. Not to mention it's an automatic heat builder; you can be your own heat source when you work out. Along with getting outside for a walk, you can stretch and lifting weights.

5. Stay Positive

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a real thing and it can affect a lot more than just your mood. Fatigue, irritability, depression, anxiety and even physical discomfort can result from the changing of seasons. The best way to beat the winter blues is to get outside daily (as mentioned above), but also boost your diet. Incorporate nutrient dense foods and fresh herbs as often as possible. Foods that are high in calcium and magnesium are said to improve stress levels, lift you out of SAD-related moods and overall keep you healthier and happier.

Trilogy: CWL Christmas Caroling, 2015





Above: World Day of Prayer, 14 March 2020: Christians in Zimbabwe

